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Lewis

NTOF

THE

THE THEBAID

OF

STATIUS,

TRANSLATED INTO

ENGLISH VERSE,

WITH

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS;

AND

A DISSERTATION upon the whole by Way of PREFACE.

Curritur ad vocem jucundam, et carmen amicæ
Thebaidos, lætam fecit cum STATIUS Urbem,
Promiſitque diem, tantâ dulcedine captos
Afficit ille animos, tantâque libidine Vulgi
Auditur; ſed cum fregit ſubſellia verſu,
Eſurit, intactam Paridi niſi vendat Agaven. *Juvenal, Sat.* 7.

All *Rome* is pleas'd, when STATIUS will rehearſe,
And longing Crowds expect the promis'd Verſe:
His lofty Numbers with ſo great a Guſt
They hear, and ſwallow with ſuch eager Luſt:
But while the common Suffrage crown'd his Cauſe,
And broke the Benches with their loud Applauſe;
His Muſe had ſtarv'd, had not a Piece unread,
And by a Player bought, ſupply'd her Bread. *Dryden.*

THE SECOND EDITION CORRECTED.

LONDON:
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MDCCLXXIII.

(1773.)

TO THE

MOST NOBLE PRINCE

HENRY

DUKE OF BEAUFORT.

YOUR GRACE's Condeſcenſion in permitting me to put my juvenile Labours under your Protection does me great Honour, and claims my warmeſt Gratitude: It was, I confeſs, my higheſt Ambition to inſcribe this Tranſlation to one, who had on a moſt public Occaſion diſtinguiſhed Himſelf by ſuch claſſical Elegance and real Dignity, as juſtly entitled Him to the univerſal Applauſe of a moſt learned as well as ſplendid Audience. — Nor can the Tranſlation of a Poem, whoſe Subject is the Actions of Heroes and Princes, be inſcribed with Propriety to any one but a Perſon deſcended like your GRACE from ſo ancient and ſo illuſtrious a Line of Anceſtors.

I ſhall

I ſhall not preſume to trouble your GRACE with a longer Addreſs, as I well know, that amidſt all Your GRACE's Princely Virtues and Amiable Qualities, this is not the leaſt conſpicuous, that Your Heart is formed to deſpiſe every, the leaſt, Appearance of Flattery. I have the Honour to be,

My Lord,

Your GRACE's *moſt obliged and*

moſt devoted humble Servant,

WILL. LILLINGTON LEWIS.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE FIRST.

THE ARGUMENT.

ETEOCLES *and* Polynices *having dethroned their Father* Oedipus *King of* Thebes, *agree to reign alternately.* Oedipus *invokes the Fury* Tiſiphone *to puniſh them; ſhe ſows Diſſention between them.* Eteocles *is choſen by Lot to reign the firſt Year. An univerſal Diſcontent prevails among the* Thebans. Jupiter *calls a Council of the Gods, and declares his Intention of puniſhing* Thebes *and* Argos. *He ſends* Mercury *to call up the Ghoſt of* Laius *from the Shades. On* Eteocles's *refuſing to give up the Sceptre at the Expiration of his Year,* Polynices *goes to* Argos *to ſolicit the Aid of* Adraſtus *againſt him. He is overtaken by a heavy Storm, and being very much fatigued, lies down at* Adraſtus's *Gate.* Tydeus *arrives at the ſame place by chance. They quarrel and fight.* Adraſtus, *alarmed at the Noiſe, comes out, reconciles, and entertains them very hoſpitably. He relates the Origin of a Sacrifice which was then celebrating, and addreſſes a Prayer to* Apollo, *which concludes the Book.*

THE

PREFACE.

IT is a general, and a true Obſervation, that we ſeldom ſit down with Pleaſure to read the *Author*, before we have ſome Knowledge of the *Man*. This ſo natural a Curioſity every Editor and Tranſlator of a Book ſhould endeavour to gratify, as the Life of the Writer is oftentimes the beſt Comment on the Work itſelf. In Compliance therefore with this Remark, we ſhall collect, and lay before our Readers all that has come to our Knowledge of the Birth, Condition, Character and Fortunes of our Poet.

Life of *Statius*.

PUBLIUS PAPINIUS STATIUS (for ſo was he called, and not *Surculus*, as ſome Grammarians affirm, who confound him with the Rhetorician, that flouriſhed about the Time of *Nero*) was born at *Naples* in the Be- Birth.

ginning of the Emperor *Claudius*'s Reign. Thoſe, who will have *Tholouſe* in *France*, to be the Place of his Birth, might have been convinced of their Error, if they had attended to what he himſelf ſays in his *Epithalamium* of *Stella* and *Violantilla*.

At te naſcentem gremio mea prima recepit
Parthenope, dulciſque ſolo tu gloria noſtro
Reptaſti.

Or in his Poem to *Claudia*.

Noſtra quoque et propriis tenuis, nec rara colonis
Parthenope, cui mite ſolum trans æquora vectæ
Ipſe Dionæa monſtravit Apollo Columbâ.

He was deſcended of a good Family by his Father's Side, who was born at *Sellæ* in *Epirus*, not far from the celebrated *Dodonæan* Grove, and taught Rhetoric to the Nobility there with ſingular Applauſe, not only for his Skill in that Profeſſion, but likewiſe for his Probity and extenſive Learning. The Honours, he was diſtinguiſhed with, bear Teſtimony to this Part of his Character; for after having been made a Citizen of *Naples*, he was preſented with the Laurel, and a Crown of Gold by *Domitian*; a Proof of his Favour with that Prince, as the former

was of his Intereſt with the People. He married *Agylline*, of whom we have no farther mention, than that ſhe died before him. See *Sylvæ*, L. 3. It is remarkable (ſays the Author of *Polymetis*) that Poetry ran more lineally in *Statius*'s Family, than perhaps in any other. He received it from his Father, who had been an eminent Poet in his Time, and lived to ſee his Son obtain the Laurel-Wreath at the *Alban* Games, as he had formerly done himſelf.---Thus far Mr. *Spence*: and it is among the *Deſiderata* of the learned, that we have nothing extant, but what the Son wrote. The *Epicedion*, we find in his *Miſcellanea*, is at once an Argument of his Father's Merit, and his own filial Piety.

OUR Author diſcovered an early Bent to Poetry, which was ſo much cheriſhed and improved by his Father's Inſtructions, that he ſoon became the public Talk, and was introduced to the firſt Wits of the Age, and afterwards to the Emperor himſelf, by his Friend *Paris*, the Player, at that Time one of the chief Court-Favourites. His literary Merit gained him ſo large a Share of the Emperor's Eſteem, that he was permitted to ſit at Table with him among his Miniſters and Courtiers of the higheſt Quality, and was often crowned for his Verſes, which were publickly recited in the Theatre.

Ter me nitidis Albana ferentem
Dona comis, ſanctoque indutum Cæſaris auro
Viſceribus complexa tuis, ſertiſque dediſti
Oſcula anhela meis.

Once however he loſt the Prize in the Capitol.

---Tu cum Capitolia noſtræ
Inficiata lyræ; ſævum, ingratumque dolebas
Mecum victa Jovem.

The frequent Determination of the Judges in his Favour created him the Envy of *Martial*; who piqued himſelf much on his *Extempore* Productions: inſomuch that he has never mentioned *Statius* in his Account of the Poets, his Contemporaries. The *Thebaid*, finiſhed at *Naples*, and dedicated to *Domitian*, was received at *Rome* with the greateſt Applauſe, as *Juvenal* has told us in the Paſſage, which I have choſen for my *Motto*. This is thought by ſome to have been nothing more than a Sneer. Mr. *Dryden* however in his Tranſlation of it, and Dr. *Cruſius*, in his Life of our Author, think otherwiſe. I ſhall give the Reader the Words of the Latter. "To "me the Occaſion of his mentioning *Statius* "ſeems to be this: he obſerves in his Satire "the low State, and ſmall Encouragement "given

" given to Men of Letters, who were often " reduced to the hard Neceſſity of Writing " for Bread; and that, notwithſtanding the " World allowed their Merit, and admired " their Writings. *Statius* is brought in, as " an unhappy Example of this ill Uſage.

Curritur ad vocem, &c.

" From this Paſſage we learn, that *Statius* " wrote a Tragedy, which *Paris* purchaſed, " who from a Player, was become the Em- " peror's Minion, the Poet being reduced to " ſell it for his Subſiſtence. This Circum- " ſtance perhaps might have introduced our " Poet to that Favourite, for I do not find, " that after his Admiſſion to his Patronage, " he wanted the Conveniences of Life. How- " ever it does not appear from what has been " quoted, that *Juvenal* has ſpoken reproach- " fully of him, but rather has given him " great and real Commendations, and has " particularly taken Notice of his noble Style; " the Tranſlator has altogether favoured this " Senſe. This Teſtimony deſerves the more " to be conſidered, as coming from one, " whom both his Friendſhip to *Martial*, and " Hatred to the Court might reaſonably be " preſumed to have made our Author's " Enemy."

BUT to return to our Poet; he had no ſooner finiſhed his *Thebaid*, than he formed his Plan of the *Achilleid*, a Work, in which he intended to take in the whole Life of his Hero, and not one ſingle Action, as *Homer* has done in the Iliad. This he left imperfect, dying at *Naples* in the Reign of *Trajan*, before he had well finiſhed two Books of it.

WHEN he was young, he fell in Love with, and married a Widow, Daughter of *Glaudius Apollinaris*, a Muſician of *Naples*. He deſcribes her in his Poems, as a very beautiful, learned, ingenious and virtuous Woman, and a great Proficient in his own favorite Study of Poeſy. Her Society was a Solace to him in his heavy Hours, and her Judgment of no ſmall Uſe in his Poem, as he himſelf has confeſſed to us in his *Sylvæ*.

Longi tu ſola Laboris
Conſcia, cumque tuis crevit mea Thebais annis,

A Woman of ſuch Qualifications, as theſe could not fail of commanding his warmeſt Love and Reſpect. He inſcribed ſeveral of his Verſes to her, and as a Mark of his Affection behaved with ſingular Tenderneſs to a Daughter, which ſhe had by a former Huſband. During his Abſence at *Naples* for the Space of twenty Years, ſhe behaved with the ſtricteſt Fidelity, and at length followed him,

him, and died there. He had no Children by her; and therefore adopted a Son, whoſe Death he bewails in a very pathetic Manner.

Tellure cadentem
Excepi, et vinctum genitali carmine fovi,
Poſcentemque novas tremulis ululatibus auras
Inſerui vitæ: quid plus tribuere Parentes?
Nonne gemam te, care Puer, quo ſoſpite natos
Non cupii?

This (as Dr. *Cruſius* obſerves) is a good Argument, that *Domitian* and *Paris*'s Bounty had ſet him above Want; one, if not the principal End, of Adoption being to have one to inherit, what we leave behind us, whoſe grateful Behaviour, and filial Duty might ſupply the Place of a true Son. Beſides the Poet informs us, that he had a ſmall Country-Seat in *Tuſcany*, where *Alba* formerly ſtood.

Parvi beatus ruris Honoribus,
Quà priſca Teucros Alba colit Lares,
Fortem atque facundum Severum
Non ſolitis fidibus ſaluto.

WITH Regard to his moral Character, our Author ſtands unimpeached; and from what we can collect, he appears to have been religious almoſt to Superſtition, an affection- Character.

ate Huſband, a loyal Subject, and good Citizen. Some Critics however have not ſcrupled to accuſe him of groſs Flattery to *Domitian*. That he paid his Court to him with a View to Intereſt, cannot be denied: ſo did *Virgil* to *Auguſtus*, and *Lucan* to *Nero*: and it is more than probable, his Patron had not yet arrived to that Pitch of Wickedneſs and Impiety, at the Time he wrote his Poem, as he ſhew'd afterwards. Envy made no Part of his Compoſition. That he acknowledged Merit, wherever he found it, his *Genethliacon* of *Lucan*, and *Encomia* on *Virgil*, bear ample Teſtimony. Nay, he carried his Reverence for the Memory of the latter almoſt to Adoration, conſtantly viſiting his Tomb, and celebrating his Birth-Day with great Solemnity. --- His Tragedy of *Agave* excepted, we have all his Works, conſiſting of his *Sylvæ*, or miſcellaneous Pieces, in five Books, his *Thebaid* in twelve, and his *Achilleid* in two.

Eſſay on the *Thebaid*.

HAVING laid before the Reader the moſt authenticated Accounts we have of our Poet's Life, I ſhall now deliver my Sentiments of the Work in general freely and impartially; not having the Vanity to expect the World will abide by my Opinion, nor invidiouſly detracting from the Merit of other Authors, to ſet that of *Statius* in a more advantageous Light, as has been the Practice of ſome literary

terary Bigots. So conſcious am I of the Want of critical Abilities, that I ſhould have declined ſaying any thing by Way of Diſſertation, had not my more able Predeceſſors entailed it upon me, and by their Examples, rendered it the indiſpenſable Duty of each ſucceeding Tranſlator. Therefore if any Thing is advanced contrary to the Doctrine of the Critics, Youth muſt plead for me, and procure that Pardon, which would be denied to Perſons of a more mature Judgment.

As the World is no longer ſo bigotted to *Ariſtotle* and *Boſſu*, as to reject a Work, merely becauſe it is not written according to their particular Rules, I ſhall not trouble myſelf to enquire, whether the *Thebaid* is an Epic Poem, or not. Sufficient is it to obſerve, that Mr. *Pope* thought it ſo; and that it has a better Title to the Name, than the *Pharſalia* of *Lucan*, which Mr. *de Voltaire*, in his paradoxical Eſſay, has termed one. However before we proceed to a critical Diſquiſition of it's Merit, it is neceſſary to inform the Reader, that the Event therein ſpoken of, and deſcribed, happened about 1251 Years before the Birth of our Saviour, and 42 before the Deſtruction of *Troy*. The Purport of the Hiſtory is this.

Sketch of the Subject.

LAIUS, King of *Thebes*, deſpairing of having any Children by his Wife *Jocaſta*, conſulted the Oracle, and received for Anſwer, that he ſhould have a Son, who would one Day murther him. To prevent this, as ſoon as the Child was born, he bored Holes through his Feet, and faſtening them to a Tree with Thongs, left him, from which Misfortune he was afterwards named *Oedipus*. The royal Infant however was preſerved by the Care of the Servants; and in Proceſs of Time, travelling near *Phocis*, met his Father *Laius* without knowing him, and upon his diſputing the Way, killed him in the Heat of Paſſion. He afterwards aſcended the Throne of *Thebes*, and married *Jocaſta* his Mother, at that Time unknown to be ſo: by her he had four Children, *Eteocles*, *Polynices*, *Antigone*, and *Iſmene*. As ſoon as his Sons were grown up to Man's Eſtate, they dethroned their Father, and agreed between themſelves to reign alternately. *Eteocles* was appointed by Lot to rule the firſt Year; but when that was expired, refuſed to reſign the Crown to *Polynices*, his younger Brother. Upon this a War commenced, in which the injured Prince was aſſiſted by *Adraſtus*, King of *Argos*, and five other Heroes. Theſe were all ſlain in Battle, except *Adraſtus*: and the two Brothers falling in ſingle Fight,

Creon

Creon uſurped the Throne, and by an inhuman Act of Cruelty in not ſuffering the dead Bodies to be buried, drew upon himſelf the Vengeance of *Theſeus*, who marched an Army againſt him, and took the City.

THE ingenious Mr. *Harte*, ſpeaking of the Subject of the *Thebaid*, ſays, "It muſt certainly be an infinite Pleaſure to peruſe the "moſt antient Piece of Hiſtory now extant, "excepting that in holy Scripture. This Remark muſt be underſtood of the Action of "the *Thebaid* only, which *Statius*, without "Queſtion, faithfully recited from the moſt "authentic Chronicles in his own Age. The "Action of the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey* happened "ſeveral Years after. This is evident from "*Homer*'s own Words. *Agamemnon* in the "fourth Book of the *Iliad* recites with great "Tranſport the Expedition of *Tydeus*, and "*Ulyſſes* mentions the Story of *Jocaſta* (or "*Epicaſte*, as he calls her) in a very particular Manner, in giving an Account of his "Deſcent to Hell, *Odyſſey*, Book 11th. The "Antiquity of the *Thebaid* may be conſidered "alſo in another View: as the Poet was obliged to conform the Manners of his Heroes "to the Time of Action, we in Juſtice ought "not to be ſo much ſhocked with thoſe Inſults over the Dead, which run through all "the Battles. This ſoftens a little the Barbarity

" barity of *Tydeus*, who expired gnawing the " Head of his Enemy, and the Impiety of " *Capaneus*, who was thunder-ſtruck, while " he was blaſpheming *Jupiter*. Whoever " reads the Books of *Joſhua* and *Judges*, will " find about thoſe Times the ſame ſavage " Spirit of Inſolence and Fierté."

Characters of the *Thebaid.*

THE latter Part of this Obſervation may ſerve, as a Defence of our Author againſt Mr. *Pope*'s Cenſure of his Characters (ſee Preface to his *Homer*) and that of *Boſſu*, who in his Treatiſe on Epic Poetry has the following extraordinary Remark. " The great- " eſt Part of *Statius*'s Characters are falſe. " The Impetuoſity of his Genius, joined to " the Deſire of amplifying, and making every " thing he would ſay, appear grand and mar- " vellous, has been the Occaſion of this De- " fect. He almoſt always carries to Exceſs " the Paſſions he repreſents in his Perſonages. " He does not know, what it is to preſerve " Uniformity: he makes his Heroes act Ex- " travagancies, which one would not pardon " in young Scholars, and often, inſtead of " deſcribing them as he ought, he has made " *Chimeras* of them all. Theſe Faults can- " not be attributed but to want of Judg- " ment, Knowledge, and a Juſtneſs of Think- " ing." Unwilling as I am to contradict a Writer of ſuch acknowledged Abilities, as

Mr. *Boſſu*,

Mr. *Boſſu*, I muſt, in Juſtice to the Poet, deny Part of the Charge, *viz.* that the greateſt Part of his Characters are falſe. I know but two, which are exaggerated in the Colouring: namely *Tydeus* and *Capaneus*. *Eteocles* and *Polynices* are out of the Queſtion: being ſuch as he was obliged to deſcribe them, in Order to attain the moral End of his Poem: which was to ſhew the fatal Conſequences of Ambition on the one Hand, and of a too greedy Thirſt of Revenge on the other. The reſt, *Adraſtus*, *Amphiaraus*, *Parthenopæus* and *Hippomedon* are very amiable Characters. In the two former we have a lively Portrait of a good King, and pious Prieſt; and the two latter diſplay great Magnanimity, and Nobleneſs of Heart in voluntarily taking Part with the injured at the Expence of their Lives and Fortunes. The female Characters are likewiſe unexceptionable. *Iſmene* and *Antigone* act the Part of tender and loving Siſters: *Argia*, *Deiphyle*, and indeed all the Relicts of the ſeven Leaders are illuſtrious Examples of conjugal Affection; and even the unhappy *Jocaſta* herſelf is blameleſs, if conſidered in the Light of a Mother.

Scheme and Conduct of the Poet.

LET us now take a View of our Author's poetical Conduct and Oeconomy, an Object, which ſhould have been firſt attended to, had I not

I not been inſenſibly drawn away to conſider his Characters. Here, diveſting myſelf of all Predilection and Partiality, I muſt own, he has in many Points failed. One great Cauſe of his Imperfection in this Particular is his having ſtuck too cloſe to Hiſtory and Tradition, and not ſufficiently called in the Aſſiſtance of Fiction and Invention, a lawful and neceſſary Advantage, which all Epic-Writers are allowed to take. The Introduction of the funeral Games however, through which he has deſtroyed the Unity of his Action, and which has been oftener attacked than any one Part beſides, is apologized for by Mr. *Harte* in a very maſterly Manner. "The Deſign of this Book (ſays he) was to "give a Reſpite to the main Action, intro-"ducing a mournful, but pleaſing Variation "from Terror to Pity. It is alſo highly pro-"bable, that *Statius* had an Eye to the fu-"neral Obſequies of *Polydore* and *Anchiſes*, "mentioned in the third and fifth Books of "*Virgil:* we may alſo look on them, as a "Prelude opening the Mind by Degrees to "receive the Miſeries and Horrors of a fu-"ture War. This is intimated in ſome "Meaſure by the Derivation of the Word "*Archemorus*. Beſides the Reaſons above-"mentioned would have a fine Opportunity "of remarking upon chief of the Heroes,

who

" who muſt make a Figure hereafter; this is " repreſented to the Eye in a lively Sketch, " that diſtributes to each Perſon his proper " Lights with great Advantage."

Speeches. THE Merit of Speeches and Orations is determined in a great Meaſure by the general Character of the Perſons, who utter them; their Propriety conſiſting in their Agreement with the Manners of the Speaker. *Adraſtus* muſt not talk like *Polynices*, nor *Capaneus* like *Amphiaraus*. *Statius* in this particular deſerves our higheſt Applauſe. His Heroes always ſpeak, as they act: his Orations are nervous, animated, eloquent, not ſo prolix as *Lucan*'s, nor ſo ſententious, as thoſe of *Virgil*. Though admirable in all, he principally excels in the mournful and pathetic. He is the ſame among the *Romans*, as *Euripides* among the *Greeks*. I forbear particularizing any Speeches here, as they have been already obſerved in the Notes.

Sentiments. THE next Point that falls under our Conſideration, is the Sentiments; in which our Author is very unequal: they are never low or vulgar, often juſt and noble, but ſometimes ranting and unnatural. He never falls, but is often loſt among the Clouds by ſoaring too high, and too ſtudiouſly avoiding every Thing, that has the Appearance of being flat and frigid. In this Article he reſembles

bles our Countryman *Lee*. He is leſs moral than *Virgil*, leſs familiar than *Homer*, and leſs philoſophical than *Lucan*.

Deſcriptions, Compariſons, &c.

We now come to his Deſcriptions, Images and Compariſons, a Part in which he ſhines with diſtinguiſhed Luſtre. So ſtrong is his Talent this Way, that whatever he deſcribes, we ſeem to ſee in Reality. In his Deſcriptions he is full and exact, in his Images bold and lively. "Your Attention (ſays Dr. *Gru-*"*ſius*) is always kept awake; nay rather the many ſurprizing Circumſtances croud in ſo thick upon the Mind, that it finds itſelf almoſt at a Loſs how to take them all in, as he repreſents them; ſo far is the Poet from "letting the Subject grow dull and troubleſome in his Hands." With Reſpect to his Similies, they are for the moſt Part proper and well-drawn; but ſometimes want a Parity in the Circumſtances, which renders them obſcure: this Defect proceeds rather from the Impetuoſity of his Genius, than Want of Judgment; for being too haſty to dwell upon Particulars, he gives nothing more than the Outlines of a Compariſon, and leaves it to the Reader's Imagination to fill them up.

Style.

From the deſcriptive Part we are naturally led to take a View of our Poet's Style, of which the Author of the Lives of the *Roman* Poets has, I think, given the beſt

Account. "*Strada* (ſays he) in his Proluſions has placed *Statius* on the higheſt Top of *Parnaſſus*; thereby intimating the Strength of his Genius, and the lofty Spirit of his Style; which indeed is generally ſupported by a bold and lively Expreſſion, and full flowing Numbers. His Manner therefore reſembles rather the martial Strut of a General, and the Magnificence of a Triumph, than the majeſtic Port and true Grandeur of a Prince, which better ſuits the inimitable Character of *Virgil*'s Style. As a Soldier cannot eaſily lay aſide the Roughneſs of his Character, neither can *Statius* deſcend from the Pomp of Language and Loftineſs of Numbers, when his Subject requires it."---To this Remark I muſt beg Leave to add, that he often uſes Helleniſms with ſingular Beauty and Propriety. There is one Fault however, which the Tranſlator, in Juſtice to himſelf, ought not to conceal, and that is his frequent Obſcurity.

Verſification.

IT remains now to treat of his Verſification; which is ſcarcely inferior to that of any Poet whatſoever. His Numbers are correct, harmonious, ſounding, expreſſive of the Senſe, and rather loftier than thoſe of *Virgil*. He has nothing of *Lucan*'s Stiffneſs, nor of that uniform Smoothneſs, which characterizes the Verſes of *Claudian*.

General Character.

IN ſhort, if *Statius* has had *Rapin* and *Boſſu* for his Cavillers, he has had *Malherbe*, *Roſteau*, *Marolles* and *Scaliger* for his Admirers: the laſt of whom thinks, he comes neareſt to *Virgil* in Majeſty of all Poets either ancient or modern. "He had even come "nearer to him (ſays he) if he had not affected it ſo much; for being naturally ambitious, whenever he has attempted to excell him, he has degenerated into *Fuſtian*. "Except the *Phœnix*, *Virgil*, he is without "Diſpute the Prince of both *Latin* and *Greek* "Poets. His Verſes are better than *Homer*'s: "he abounds more in Figures, has more "poetical Oeconomy, and is more chaſte and "correct in his moral Sentences."

I SHALL only trouble the Reader with one Quotation more on this Head; and that is from the amiable *Fenelon*'s Account of the War between the Ancients and Moderns, in which he fancifully aſcertains the Rank and Merits of our Author, as a Poet.

"*Lucan* being mightily incenſed to ſee "*Virgil* preferred before him, proteſted a"gainſt the Election, and refuſed to agree "on any other Terms, but being at leaſt de"clared his *Colleague*. Saying in ſententious "and haughty Verſe, if *Virgil* could not ſuf"fer an Equal, he was reſolved not to en"dure a Superior; to which *Virgil* only

" made Anſwer with a modeſt Smile. But " *Lucan* was hiſſed at by the whole Aſſembly " of ancient *Latin* Poets, who well knew " the Diſtance betwixt him and *Virgil*, and " therefore told him, his Pretenſions would " only bear Water amongſt ſome Moderns, " that were not capable of reliſhing all the " Beauties and Niceties of *Latin* Poeſy; nor " could he reaſonably carry his Ambition " higher, than to be *Virgil*'s Lieutenant. But " he refuſed the Command, and retiring with " a *Spaniſh* Gravity, ſaid.

Victrix cauſa deis placuit, ſed victa Catoni.

" Giving them to underſtand, he would ſeek " Revenge for the Wrong, he believed, they " had done him. *Statius* in his Default was " choſen by *Virgil* for his Lieutenant-Gene- " ral, in Preference to *Silius Italicus*, who " pretended a Title to that Employment."

In another Part, ſpeaking of the Arrangement of the Forces, the ſame Author ſays. " The Army of the *Latin* Poets was drawn " up in Form of Battle on the left of the " *Grecians* upon the ſame Line. *Virgil* had " poſted his *Æneids* in the midſt of the Front, " and called them the firſt Legion, he de- " ſigned to fight in Perſon at the Head of " theſe, and named the *Thebaid* of *Statius* " the ſecond, which he diſpoſed on the left

" of his own Poem; and *Statius* was to ſe-
" cond *Virgil* at the Head of the Epic."

To conclude, whoever will read the *Thebaid* in the Original, will find the Author to be a much better Poet, than the World in general imagines, I ſay, imagines, becauſe two Thirds of the Men of Letters in this Kingdom have never read him; but form their Opinions from the Character given him by ſome few prejudiced Perſons. *Borrichius* has juſtly obſerved, that he is the ſame among the Poets, as *Alexander* was among Heroes. He has many and great Beauties, but they are blended with Defects. He has more Harmony than *Lucan*, and more Spirit than *Silius Italicus*; and one may ſafely ſay, that if he be not equal to *Virgil* in ſome Points, he approaches ſo near him, as to leave far behind thoſe of his own and after Times. As Nothing throws a greater Luſtre on the fine Paſſages in the *Iliad*, than *Virgil*'s condeſcending to copy them; ſo nothing is a greater Argument of *Statius*'s Merit, than the verbal Imitations of *Chaucer*, who was perhaps a Poet of the moſt lively Imagination of any amongſt the Moderns. I prefer this to Volumes of Criticiſm. No one would imitate, what he could exceed. Such therefore as he is with all his Imperfections, I preſent him to the Reader, whom I wiſh

the

the ſame Pleaſure, that I have found in contemplating his many and great Beauties.

HAVING ſpoken of the Beauties and Defects of the Original, it may not be improper to acquaint the Reader, what he is to expect in the following Verſion. The great Inducement to the attempting it was it's not having been wholly tranſlated before. I had long conſidered it as the moſt illuſtrious Work of *Roman* Antiquity after the *Æneid*, and conſequently was concerned, that it had never appeared in an *Engliſh* Dreſs. Five Books indeed have been rendered into *Engliſh* Verſe by *T-----rs:* Mr. *Pope* made the firſt ſpeak *Engliſh*, and the late ingenious Mr. *Walter Harte* of St. *Mary Hall*, OXON, the ſixth. This is all, that to my Knowledge has been tranſlated. With more Ambition therefore than Prudence, I begun it ſoon after I entered at the Univerſity, at the Age of eighteen, and muſt confeſs, that my chief Merit conſiſts in having had the Patience to go through with it at a Time of Life, which is too often ſquandered away in a Circle of Follies and Amuſements. Thoſe Readers will be very much diſappointed, who expect to find a literal Verſion. The Tranſlator has profited too much from the Fate of others, to attempt it. If he could not be juſt to the Original in a free Verſion, he had been much

leſs

leſs ſo in a cloſe one: ſuch is the Diſparity of the two Languages; and of all the *Latin* Authors *Statius* perhaps is the moſt difficult. It is hoped however, the Liberties, which are taken, will not be deemed too great, nor the Deviations from the Original too many. In the main Parts of the Poem, ſuch as the Fable, Manners and Sentiments, Omiſſions and Contractions are altogether unpardonable; but in others leſs eſſential, where the Variation does not exceed one Word, as the ſubſtituting another Epithet to ſtrengthen the Idea, it is preſumed, no man of Candour will be offended. The Abuſe of *Triplets* and *Alexandrines* has been very juſtly objected to: for which Reaſon the Tranſlator has ſcrupulouſly avoided them, and, unleſs his Memory very much deceives him, has not one of either in the whole Work. The Incorrectneſs of modern Rhymes has likewiſe given reaſonable Ground for Cenſure. Great Care has been taken of this Point and the Tranſlator flatters himſelf that very few bad Rhimes will be found in the whole Poem. If there is now and then a Darkneſs, there is often a Light in Antiquity, which is beſt preſerved in a literal Verſion. Whenever the Tranſlator has found this (as indeed he has very frequently) he has always ſtuck cloſe to the Original. It happens ſometimes

times again, that a whole Paſſage is ſo obſcure, as not to be rendered *verbatim:* in this Caſe all that can be done, is to tranſlate in the Lump, and by carefully conſulting the Context, give what ſeems to be the general Senſe as briefly and as poetically as one can. A Tranſlator is not accountable for the Faults of the Author. Now it ſometimes happens, that a Thought is low and vulgar, an Image not phyſically true, and a Warrior, who has been killed, deſcribed fighting again through a Slip of the Poet's Memory. Whenever therefore the Reader perceives an Inaccuracy of this Kind, he ſhould turn to the Paſſage in the Original, and not throw the Blame on the Tranſlator, before there is Conviction that he deſerves it. If there has been too great a Prolixity in Notes and Quotations, it is but Juſtice to aſcribe it rather to the Deſire of gratifying his Pleaſure, than diſplaying his Learning: ſince it is one of the moſt agreeable Employments a rational Mind can be ingaged in, to compare the Flowers of Genius and Fancy together.

AFTER, all the Tranſlator profeſſes himſelf incapable of doing *Statius* Juſtice, and always keeping up that Fire and Spirit, which ſo peculiarly animates the Original. His Abilities are unequal to ſo arduous a Taſk, and if they were greater than they are, the

Engliſh

Engliſh Language would in many Points fail him. He therefore ſubmits this Verſion to the Publick, as the Firſt-fruits of his Labours, and ſincerely wiſhes that when his Judgment is matured by Time, he may be able to produce ſomething, which may ſhew, that their preſent Indulgence was not entirely thrown away upon him.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE FIRST.

OF guilty *Thebes*, to foreign Arms a Prey,
Fraternal Rage, and impious Luſt of Sway,
My daring Muſe would ſing, ſo *Phœbus* deign
To prompt the Bard, and harmonize the Strain.
Say, Goddeſs, whence ſhall I my Subject trace,
From *Cadmus*, Author of the vicious Race?

Verſe 5. *Say, Goddeſs*] STATIUS has been pretty ſeverely handled by ſome ingenious Critics among the Moderns for this ſeeming Doubt where to commence his Narration. Tho' I cannot pretend to exculpate him intirely for running counter to the Rules laid down by *Horace*; yet I cannot but hope, he will appear leſs worthy of Cenſure than he has hitherto done, if we ſuppoſe, that the Poet judged the greateſt Part of his *Roman* Readers ignorant of the *Theban* Hiſtory (as undoubtedly they were) and yet it was neceſſary, they ſhould have ſome previous Knowledge of it, in order to underſtand his Poem, and the Alluſions, he frequently makes to the Hiſtory and Cuſtoms of that Nation. But how were they to be acquainted with it? Was he to have directly collected the Heads of it, and declared his Intention? No: that would have been the greateſt Affront he could have put upon them, which our Author was ſufficiently aware of. Let us admire then the Art and Dexterity of the Poet, who has extricated himſelf from the Embaraſſments he lay under by this polite and ingenious Device. If he has offended, it is a glorious Offence, or (to uſe the Words of Mr. *Pope*) a Grace ſnatch'd beyond the Rules of Art.

v. 6. *From* Cadmus] *Cadmus* was the Son of *Agenor*; this obſtinate Prince inſiſted on his travelling in queſt of his Siſter *Europa*, who had been carried off by *Jupiter* in the Form of a Bull. The Hero complied, but not finding his Siſter, ſettled near *Thebes*.

Shall I deſcribe him on the raging Sea,
Obſequious to the Monarch's ſtern Decree?
Then tell, from whence th' aſpiring Nation roſe,
And to what Source proud *Thebes* its Grandeur owes,
How ſoften'd Rocks (ſo will'd reſiſtleſs Fate)
Danc'd into Form, to grace a future State?
What fatal Cauſes could ſo far incenſe
The Queen of Heav'n, and what the dire Offence,
When *Athamas*, by Wrath divine purſu'd,
His trembling Hands in filial Blood imbrued,
And his pale Spouſe, to ſhun his angry Bow,
Sprung from the Beach, and ſought the Depths below?
Wave then, whate'er to *Cadmus* may belong,
O Muſe, and date the Subject of thy Song,
From wretched *Oedipus*; —— nor yet aſpire
In *Cæſar*'s Praiſe to ſtring thy feeble Lyre,
Or tell, how twice he bade the *Rhine* obey,
How twice the *Danube* roll'd beneath his Sway:
(While *Dacia*, daring impious War to wage,
Fell the juſt Object of the Victor's Rage)
Or how, in youthful Armour clad, he ſtrove
To vindicate the ſacred Rights of *Jove*.
Nor thou, commiſſion'd in the Rolls of Fate,
To ſwell the Glories of the *Latian* State,

v. 11. *How ſoften'd*] The Poets feign, *Amphion* played ſo ſweetly upon the Lyre, that the Stones and Rocks danced into Walls and built the City afterwards called *Thebes*.

v. 15. *When* Athamas] He was the Father of *Palæmon*, and Huſband of *Ino*: but being ſeized with Lunacy thro' the Malice of *Juno*, purſued his Children with his Bow and Arrows. Whereupon the wretched Mother leaped into the Sea with one of her Sons.

v. 29. *Nor thou commiſſion'd*] *Virgil* and *Lucan* gave the Precedent of this fulſome and almoſt impious Flattery, in Compliment to *Auguſtus*

By wild Ambition led away, reſign
The *Roman* Helm to feebler Hands than thine.
What tho' the Stars contract their liquid Space,
Well-pleas'd to yield thee a ſerener Place;
Tho' *Phœbus*, conſcious of ſuperior Blaze,
Would intermix with thine his friendly Rays;
And *Jove* his wide-extended Empire ſhare,
Content to rule an equal Tract of Air;
Yet may thy People's Wiſhes thee detain,
And *Jove* enjoy an undivided Reign.
The time will come, when a diviner Flame
Shall prompt me to reſound thy ripen'd Flame,
Mean while permit my Muſe to ſeek Renown
In *Theban* Wars, a Prelude to thy own.
She ſings of Souls diſcordant e'en in Death,
And Hate, that fled not with the vital Breath;
A Throne, for which the vengeful Fates decreed,
Two Rival-Kings by mutual Arms ſhould bleed,
And ſcepter'd Chiefs; who long, unbury'd lay,
To Birds and Beaſts an undiſtinguiſh'd Prey;
When *Dirce*'s Source was ſtain'd with kindred Gore,
And *Thetis* from the Blood-impurpled Shore
Beheld *Iſmenos* roll a mingled Heap
Of Arms and Warriors to the frighted Deep.
What firſt, O *Clio*, ſhall adorn thy Page,
Th' expiring Prophet, or *Ætolian*'s Rage?
Say, wilt thou ſing, how grim with hoſtile Blood,
Hippomedon repell'd the ruſhing Flood;

Auguſtus and *Nero*. I hope the Reader will diſpenſe with my tranſcribing the Paſſages, as they would ſwell the Compaſs of theſe Notes beyond what was intended. —— *See* Georgics, *Lib.* I. & Pharſalia, *Lib.* I.

Lament th' *Arcadian* Youth's untimely Fate,
Or *Jove*, oppos'd by *Capaneus*, relate?
  Now *Oedipus*, inur'd to deepeſt Night,
No more in Sighs bewails the Loſs of Sight;
And tho' the Rays of *Phœbus* ne'er invade
His dark Abode, or pierce th' eternal Shade,
Yet Conſcience haunts him with reflecting Glaſs,
Thro' which his Sins, too well diſtinguiſh'd, paſs.
Their Torches o'er his Head the Furies rear,
And Threats and harſh Reproaches grate his Ear.
Now to th' unpitying Ruler of the Skies
He lifts the gloomy Sockets of his Eyes,
Then ſtrikes the gaping Void with impious Hands,
And thus aloud infernal Aid demands.
Ye Gods, who Sway in *Tartarus* maintain,
Where guilty Spirits howl with endleſs Pain;
Thou *Styx*, whoſe gloomy Banks, and ſhady Lake
A ſad Impreſſion on my Senſes make.
Tiſiphone, on whoſe repeated Name
I've dwelt, if *Oedipus* Attention claim,
Oh! lend an Ear, and from the Realms below
Accord my Wiſhes, and aſſiſt my Vow.
If from my Sire miſ-deem'd I took my Way
To *Cyrrha*'s Fane on that important Day,

v. 61. *Now* Oedipus] This is an extremely fine Paſſage: the latter Part of it alludes to the following Verſe in *Euripides*.

Ὦ Μητερ, ικετευω σε, μη πίσευέ μοι
Τὰς αἱματωπὸς, και δρακοντώδεις κορας.
Αὗται γὰρ, αὗται πλησίον θρώσκουσί μου. Oreſtes, V. 225.

v. 71. *Then ſtrikes*] I have rendered *Inane Solum* by *Gaping Void* as it is ſpoken of the Sockets of his Eyes. *Gronovius* and Mr. *Pope* have taken it in the ſame Senſe, in Oppoſition to the Opinion of *Bernartius* and *Barclay*.

When

When *Laius* bled beneath theſe impious Hands,
Where the three Paths divide the *Phocian* Lands:
If ſeconded by thee, I durſt chaſtize
Th' inſidious *Sphinx*, and gain'd the glitt'ring Prize;
Or by thy fav'ring Torch conducted, ſtrove
To meet with equal Fires *Jocaſta*'s Love.
If ſtudious of thy Cauſe, I now prepare
Two Sons, whoſe riſing Merits claim thy Care;
And, too impatient of the vital Light,
Forc'd from theſe ſtreaming Orbs the Balls of Sight:
Attend, and aid the Vengeance I requeſt;
If worthy thee, and what thou would'ſt ſuggeſt.
My Sons (if Sons they are) their Sire diſown,
Spoil'd of his Eyes, and driven from his Throne;
And, while a guideleſs, helpleſs Wretch I roam,
Deride my Groans in pamp'ring Eaſe at Home.

v. 85. *If ſeconded by thee*] The curious Reader may ſee the *Sphynx*'s Riddle in *Greek*, prefixed to the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of *Sophocles*, *Johnſon*'s Edition, Volume 2.

v. 95. *My Sons*] The *Oedipus* of *Sophocles* complains in like Manner of his Son's Cruelty, and wiſhes them a ſimilar Puniſhment.

Ἀλλ' εἰ θεοί σφι μήτε τὴν πεπρωμένην
Ἔριν κατασβέσειαν, ἐν δ' ἐμοὶ τέλος.
Αὐτοῦ γένοιτο τῇδε τῆς μάχης πέρι.
Ἧς νῦν ἔχονται, κἀπαναιρῶνται δόρυ.
Ὡς ἦτ' ἂν ὃς νῦν σκῆπτρα, καὶ θρόνους ἔχει,
Μείνειεν, ἦτ' ἂν ἐξειληλυθὼς πολιν
Ἔλθοι πότ' αὖθις, οἵγε τὸν φύσαντ' ἐμὲ
Οὕτως ἀτίμως πατρίδος ἐξωθούμενον
Οὐκ ἴσχον, ἀδ' ἡμυναν, ἀλλ' ἀνάσατο.
Αὐτοῖν ἐπέμφθην, κἀξεπηρύχθην φυγάς. V. 434.

There is no Character in the Drama more deſerving of our Pity, than that of *Oedipus*. His Sins were chiefly involuntary: The Gods ſeem to have levelled all their Vengeance at him. This dreadful Imprecation, however, againſt his own Children blackens his Character, and refutes all the Arguments, which Compaſſion can ſuggeſt in his Favour.

Such is their Pity, ſuch their filial Love,
And yet inactive ſleep the Bolts of *Jove*:
Then be the Place of *Jove* by thee ſupply'd,
To check their Inſults, and reward their Pride;
Let them ſome laſting Stroke of Vengeance mourn,
Which may extend to Ages yet unborn:
Give them the Crown, which ſteep'd in recent Gore,
From the cleft Temples of my Sire I tore.
Go then, diſſolve the ſacred Bonds of Peace,
Bid Diſcord riſe, and Love fraternal ceaſe:
Urge them to dare, what may to lateſt Times
Tranſmit their Guilt, ſome yet un-acted Crimes.
Soon thoul't experience (do but lead the Way)
Their headſtrong Wills, impatient of Delay;
And in the Out-lines of their Tempers find
The trueſt Portrait of their Father's Mind.
The liſt'ning Fury now prepares to riſe,
And tow'rds the ſuppliant Wretch directs her Eyes.
On ſad *Cocytos'* Banks ſhe ſate reclin'd,
And to the Breeze her flowing Locks reſign'd.
Her Snakes, unbound, along the Margin glide,
Sport on the Waves, or laſh the ſulph'ry Tide.
From thence ſhe ſprings; not ſwifter Light'nings fly,
Or falling Stars, that cleave the mid-way Sky.
The Phantoms ken her, as ſhe ſoars in Air,
And to the diſtant Shades in haſte repair.

V. 124. *And to*] *Spencer* ſeems to have alluded to this Thought in his *Fairy Queen*, B. 6. Canto 6. Stanza.

Echidna is a Monſter direful dread,
Whom Gods do hate; and Heav'ns abhor to ſee;
So hideous is her Shape, ſo huge her Head,
That e'en the helliſh Fiends affrighted be,
At Sight thereof, and from her Preſence flee.

Thro'

Thro' dreary Realms, and *Pluto*'s wide Domains
She roams, and ſoon th' infernal Manſion gains.
The Day beheld her dire Approach, and ſhrowds
Her ſick'ning Glories in encircling Clouds,
E'en *Atlas* labour'd with unwonted Fears,
And ſhook beneath the Burden of the Spheres.
From *Malea*'s humble Vale ſhe roſe in flight,
And ſped to *Thebes*, the Monſter's chief Delight.
Not Hell itſelf, nor the *Tartarean* Coaſt
An equal Share of her Eſteem can boaſt.
A hundred Serpents on her Viſage glare
With horrid Scales, and mingle with her Hair:
Her Eyes, intrench'd within her briſtling Head,
By Fits, a livid, fainty Splendor ſhed.
Thus *Cynthia* bluſhes thro' the Mid-night Shade,
When magic Charms her lab'ring Beams invade.
Her bloated Skin with gather'd Venom teems,
And her foul Mouth exhales ſulphureous Steams.
Diſeaſe and Death's annihilating Force
From hence, as ſhe commiſſions, bend their Courſe.
Some ſtiffen'd Rags were o'er her Shoulders thrown,
And the dire Monſter by her Dreſs was known.
A creſted Serpent arm'd her better Hand,
And in the left ſhe toſs'd a flaming Brand.
When now ſhe ſtood where craggy Cliffs ariſe,
And proud *Cithæron* threats the neighb'ring Skies,
Rang'd on her Head, the ſcaly Monſters glare,
And hiſs, entwin'd in her envenom'd Hair.
A Signal to the Earth, the Shores reſound,
And *Greece* from far returns the deaf'ning Sound.

v. 153. *A Signal*] This beautiful Paſſage is undoubtedly imitated from *Virgil*, Æneid: Lib. 7. Verſe 511.

At

The diſtant Summons fam'd *Parnaſſus* took,
And old *Eurotas* from it's Summit ſhook:
Huge *Oete* nods, half ſunk with all her Pines,
And *Iſthmos* ſcarce the parted Waves diſjoins;
While ſtarting at the ſhock, *Leucothoe* preſs'd
The young *Palæmon* cloſer to her Breaſt.
The Fury to the Palace now had come,
And ſhaded with her Wings the ſplendid Dome,
When here and there each furious Brother flies,
And Rage the Place of mutual Love ſupplies:
While Jealouſy and Hate-ingend'ring Fears
Flame in their Breaſts, and haunt their cred'lous Ears.
Their reſtleſs Minds then wild Ambition fires
To break the League, and deadly Wrath inſpires.

At Dea——
Paſtorale canit ſignum cornuque recurvo
Tartaream intendit vocem: qua protinus omne
Contremuit nemus, & ſilvæ intonuere profundæ.
Audiit & Triviæ longe Lacus, audiit amnis
Sulfureâ *Nar* albus aquâ, fontesque Velini:
Et trepidæ matres preſſere ad pectora natos.

Who copied it from *Apollonius Rhodius*, Argon. L. 4. V. 129.

—— Ροιζει δέ πεχωριον, αμφι δέ μακραι
Ηιόνες ποταμοιο, κ) ασπετον ιαχεν αλσος.
Εκλυον οί κ) πολλον εκας τιτηνιδος αίης
Κολχιδα γην ενεμοντο παρα προχοησι χυκοιο,
Ος αποκιδναμενος ποταμω κελαδοντος Αραξεω,
Φασιδι συμφερέαι ἱερον ῥοον, οί δέ συν αμφω
Καυκασίην αλαδ' εἰς ἐν ἑλαυμενοι προχεουσιν,
Δειμαλι δ' ἐξαγρουλο λεκωίδες, αμφι δέ παισι
Νηπιαχοις, οίεσφιν υπ' αγκαλιδεσσιν ιαινον
Ροιζω παλλομενοις, χειρας βαλον ἀσχαλοωσαι.

This Stroke of Nature is tender and affecting to the laſt Degree. Others would have been ſatisfied to have mentioned the Effects of this dreadful Blaſt upon the Woods and Mountains. *Virgil* knew, that this Circumſtance of the Mother's catching their Infants to their Breaſts would more touch and intereſt his Readers, than all the other pompous Images, great as they are. *Warton's Virgil.*

Their

Their haughty Souls ſuperior Pow'r diſown,
And ſcorn th' alternate Splendors of a Crown.
Such Diſcord riſes from divided Sway,
When each will rule, and neither will obey.
As two young Steers, when firſt compell'd to bow
Their ſtubborn Necks, and trail the galling Plow,
Friſk here and there, impatient of the Toil,
And ſpread Diſorder o'er the furrowy Soil.
Thus Diſcord arms the Brothers in her Cauſe,
And urges them to cancel Nature's Laws.
Firſt they decreed, that each in Turn ſhould wear
The Diadem in his ſucceſſive Year.
Unhappy Youths, no longer doom'd to prove
The Joys of Friendſhip, and fraternal Love!
While that in Exile mourns his preſent State,
This dreads, alas! the ſame impending Fate.
Nor long this League withheld their impious Hands,
From executing Diſcord's dire Commands:
But ere one Year was clos'd, they both gave way
To fierce Contention, and Deſire of Sway.
Yet then no Gates of Iv'ry did unfold
The Palace, beaming with *Barbaric* Gold,
No poliſh'd Arches, fram'd of *Parian* Stone,
Beneath th' incumbent Dome in Order ſhone,
No Guards, reclining on erected Spears,
Eſſay'd to chace the ſleepleſs Tyrant's Fears.
Nor curious Gems, inlaid with Art divine,
Flam'd on the Brim, and ſparkled in the Wine.
Meer Luſt of Pow'r the Rival-Brothers arms,
And fills a narrow Realm with War's Alarms.
But while their Claims yet undetermin'd ſtand,
And none enjoys in Peace ſupreme Command;

Law

Law gives a Sanction to injurious Might,
And Pow'r is hallow'd with the Name of Right.
Say, Rivals, why ye ruſh to mutual Death,
And why ſo laviſh of your vital Breath?
Not all th' united Realms, which *Sol* ſurveys,
Adorn'd with orient, or declining Rays,
When to the South he bends his rapid Courſe,
Or the bleak North enjoys his temp'rate Force.
Not all the Wealth that fertile *Tyre* can boaſt,
Nor all that glitters on the *Phrygian* Coaſt,
Could claim ſuch Deeds, or merit ſuch Regard,
Were all thoſe Realms the Conqueror's Reward.
Mean while the Lots for the firſt Year were thrown,
And proud *Eteocles* aſcends the Throne.
How grateful then, O Tyrant, was the Day,
When all around were ſubject to thy Sway!
How pleas'd, without Contention to devour
The wiſh'd-for Sweets of undivided Pow'r!
And now the diſaffected *Thebans* vent
In whiſper'd Tales their growing Diſcontent.
To th' abſent Prince in ſecret they adhere,
And curſe the ſlow Progreſſion of the Year.
Then one, by Nature ready to complain,
Alike diſſatisfy'd with every Reign,
Well taught to feel rebellious Faction's Flame,
And brand with Calumny the royal Name,
Exclaim'd aloud.—Shall then the *Theban* State
Feel each Viciſſitude of cruel Fate;
Still muſt our ſlaviſh Necks with Patience bear
Th' alternate Yoke of each tyrannic Heir?
Who now reverſe our Fates, divide the Land,
And hold inferior Fortune at Command.

For e'er ſhall *Thebes* her ſad Condition mourn,
And dread each exil'd Tyrant's quick Return?
Is this thy fixt Decree, Almighty *Jove*,
Is this a Proof of thy paternal Love?
Was this a Curſe entail'd upon our Race?
Say, from what Time the Omen we may trace?
When *Cadmus* ſought his Siſter on the Main,
Sow'd with the Serpent's Teeth the fertile Plain,
And, forc'd on fair *Bæotia*'s Soil by Fate,
Laid the Foundation of the *Theban* State?
See, how elate with Pride our King appears,
Free from Competitors, and void of Fears!
What threat'ning Looks he wears, as if again
He ſcorn'd to yield his temporary Reign.
Yet none before was eaſier of Acceſs,
More affable, or prone to give Redreſs.
Nor wonder we.——He was not then alone,
Nor without Dread of a divided Throne.
While we ſtand here, a patient ſervile Band,
Prepar'd to act, whate'er our Lords command.
As when two Winds contend with adverſe Force,
And influence by Turns the Veſſel's Courſe,
On this Side now, obſequious to the Blaſt,
Now there ſhe nods, and ſtill obeys the laſt.

v. 253. *As when*] It has been obſerved of *Statius*, that he ſhines particularly in Deſcriptions and Similies; and I will venture to ſay, this is not the worſt of the latter in the whole Work. *Mediæ nutat Fortuna carinæ*, is a fine Expreſſion, and its Spirit unattainable in *Engliſh* Verſe. However, if Similies are any where unreaſonable, they certainly are in Speeches, and eſpecially thoſe delivered with any Warmth. I have ſomewhere ſeen *Virgil* cenſured for putting ſo many Similies in *Æneas*'s Mouth, during the Narration of his Adventures to *Dido*.

Thus

Thus fares our State, between the doubtful Sway
Of either Prince, unknowing which t'obey.
Diſtracted, tortur'd with Suſpenſe ſhe ſtands,
While this repeats his Threats, and that commands.
Mean while the King of Heav'n, imperial *Jove*,
Convenes a Synod of the Pow'rs above;
Full in the midſt, enthron'd, the Thund'rer ſate,
Sublime in all the Pomp of regal State.
Beneath his piercing Eye, in full Survey,
The ſpacious Earth, and Seas contracted lay.
His Brow was void of Frowns, ſerene his Look,
Yet at his Nod the whole Creation ſhook.
Their heav'nly King the riſing Senate greet,
And at his Word reſume their ſtarry Seat.
Inferior Gods from ev'ry Quarter come,
By Rank diſtinguiſh'd in the ſtarry Dome.
None abſent were of all, whoſe Force can bind,
Or on the Deep diſcharge the furious Wind.
No roſy Dryad of the ſhady Wood,
Nor azure Siſter of the chryſtal Flood.
But here, obedient to their Sov'reign's Will,
The Winds are ſilent, and the Waves lie ſtill.

v. 261. *Mean while*] This Deſcription is every Way ſuitable to thoſe refined Ideas our Author had of the ſupreme Being. The Images are as grand as the human Mind can conceive, or Fancy repreſent of ſuch an Aſſembly; and the Harangue of *Jove* does not baulk the great Expectations the preceding Deſcription has raiſed of him.

——— *Grave & immutabile ſanctis*
Pondus adeſt verbis, & vocem fata ſequuntur.

is not more ſublime than conciſe and expreſſive: the Senſe of which an *Italian* or *French* Poet would have ſcarce comprized in ſix or eight Verſes. I ſhould want common Juſtice, if I deny'd Mr. *Pope* the Praiſe ſo juſtly deſerved from the Tranſlation of this Paſſage, which the Reader may compare with the Beginning of the tenth *Æneid*.

Thro'

Thro' Heav'n's Expanſe a gath'ring Horror rolls
And huge Olympus trembles to the Poles.
With Rays ſerene the wreathed Pillars glare,
And a new Luſtre gilds the Fields of Air.
Its Tremors now the Globe began to ceaſe,
And Nature lay reſign'd to downy Peace;
When thus the Thund'rer ſpoke: aſſenting Fate
On ev'ry Accent ſtamp'd reſiſtleſs Weight.
Say, muſt I ſtill of human Crimes complain,
And muſt the Thund'rer's Bolts be hurl'd in vain?
Why ſeek they thus my tardy Wrath to prove,
And ſcorn my proffer'd Clemency and Love?
While yet the *Cyclops* ply their Arms no more,
And *Ætna* weeps for her exhauſted Store.
For this I ſuffer'd head-ſtrong *Phaeton*
To mount the Car of the reluctant Sun;
And *Neptune* bad th' impriſon'd Waters flow,
And Hills and Vales no more Diſtinction know:
But all in vain; our Vengeance they defy,
And triumph o'er the Ruler of the Sky.
To puniſh theſe, I leave the Realms above,
A Race deſcended from Imperial *Jove:*
With *Perſeus Argos'* Sons Alliance claim,
From *Cadmus Thebes* derives immortal Fame.
Who has not heard of wretched *Cadmus'* Fate,
And the long Labours of the *Theban* State?
When from the ſilent Regions of the Night,
The Furies ſprang, and ruſh'd to mortal Fight.
Why ſhould I publiſh the fierce Mother's Shame,
And Deeds, the Pow'rs of Heav'n would bluſh to name?
Before I cou'd recount their num'rous Crimes
From *Cadmus'* Days unto the preſent Times,

Phœbus

Phœbus wou'd ſeek the Chambers of the Main,
And riſe to gild the Courts of Heav'n again.
Say, without Horror can the Tale be read
Of *Laius* ſlain, and his diſhonour'd Bed?
Dire Monſter! firſt to cauſe his Father's Death!
Then ſtain the Womb, from whence he drew his Breath.
Yet th' angry Pow'rs he ſatisfies with Groans,
And Gloom eternal for his Sins atones.
No more he breathes at large our upper Air,
But feeds the Worms of Conſcience with Deſpair.
Yet ſay, what Fury cou'd his Sons inſpire
Thus to torment their old, unhappy Sire;
To trample on his Eyes with impious Feet,
And hurl him headlong from the regal Seat?
Then let us pity him; nor let in vain
The wretched King of filial Rage complain;
Hence ſhall it be my Buſ'neſs to redreſs
His Wrongs, and crown his Wiſhes with Succeſs.
The Day ſhall come, when Diſcord from afar
Shall give whole Nations to the Waſte of War;
When the whole guilty Race in Fight ſhall fall,
And one incircling Ruin ſwallow all.
Adraſtus ſhall in dire Alliance join
With Heaven, and compleat the Fate's Deſign.
Nor let proud *Argos* triumph: 'Tis decreed,
That ſhe amid the gen'ral Carnage bleed:
The Craft of *Tantalus*, and impious Feaſt
Yet wake my Vengeance, and inflame my Breaſt.
Then *Juno*, impotent of Paſſion, broke
Her ſullen Silence, and with Fury ſpoke.

v. 339. *Then Juno*] The *Juno* in *Statius* is the ſame with that of the Iliad and Æneid. Her *ſummum bonum* is of the negative Kind, and

Why urge me thus to Deeds of martial Rage,
Shall *Juno* ſtill in mortal Strife engage?
Thou know'ſt, no Mortals merit more my Grace,
Than *Argos*, and the fam'd *Inachian* Race,
By me for e'er enrich'd, and taught to wield
With ſure Succeſs the Weapons of the Field.
Tho' there thy Wiles, and providential Care
O'ercame the Keeper of the *Pharian* Fair,
And the fam'd Argive was debauch'd of old,
Too fond, alas! of all-bewitching Gold.
Yet theſe obſcurer Crimes I could forgive,
Did not proud *Thebes* my ſtifled Ire revive;
Where *Jove* in all his dazling Glory ſhone,
And hurl'd the Bolts to *Juno* due alone.
Let puniſh'd *Thebes* abſolve th' injurious Deed,
Nor both beneath divided Vengeance bleed.
But if, tenacious of thy Right divine,
Thoul't thwart my Will, and fruſtrate my Deſign,
Deſcend from Heav'n, fulfil thy ſtern Deſire,
Raze *Samos*, wrap *Mycenæ*'s Walls in Fire,
The guiltleſs *Spartan* Race at once confound,
And their fair Structures level with the Ground.

and conſiſts chiefly in the Gratification of a contradicting and perverſe Temper. She has always ſome Favourites to ſhelter from the juſt Vengeance of *Jove*, and her Intreaties for Pardon, or Incitements to Puniſhment are the Effects of the blindeſt Partiality, or moſt inveterate Prejudice. She will not permit *Argos* to partake of the Puniſhment of *Thebes*, but hurries *Jupiter* on to put his Threats in Execution againſt the latter, which had been an Eye-witneſs of his Adultery.

v. 353. *Where Jove*] The aſpiring *Semele* would admit the Embraces of *Jupiter* on no other Condition, than his coming to her encircled with Thunder and Lightening, as he was wont to *Juno*. The unfortunate Fair ſucceeded in her Wiſhes, but periſhed in the Completion of them.

With

With Incenſe why ſhould *Juno*'s Altars blaze,
And joyful *Pæans* ſwell the Note of Praiſe?
Transfer to more deſerving *Iſis*' Fane
The fatten'd Victim, deſtin'd to be ſlain.
For her in *Egypt* bid the Timbrel ſound,
And *Nile* from ev'ry Mouth her Praiſe rebound.
But if thou wilt chaſtize the preſent Age,
And ſacrifice whole Nations to thy Rage,
If thou wilt trace obliterated Crimes
From the dark Annals of preceding Times,
Say, from what Period then it is decreed,
And to what Times the guilty World ſhall bleed.
Begin, from whence in many a winding Maze
To the *Sicilian* Stream *Alpheus* ſtrays:
There dire *Arcadia*'s Swains preſum'd to found
Thy ſacred Temple on polluted Ground;
Where ſtern *Oenomaus*' Car was wont to ſtand,
And mould'ring Skulls lie ſcatter'd on the Sand.
Since ſuch Oblations pleaſe, ſince patient *Jove*
Yet courts the Shades of *Ida*'s guilty Grove,
And favours *Crete*, whoſe impious Sons preſume
To ſhew the King of Heav'n's fictitious Tomb;
In *Argos* let thy Spouſe unenvy'd reign,
And ſhare the myſtic Honours of the Fane:
Nor waſte in Fight a Race deriv'd from *Jove*,
A Race, whoſe Merits claim paternal Love.
Let more deteſted Realms in Wars engage,
And feel the ſad Effects of filial Rage.

v. 379. *Where ſtern Oenomaus'*] *Oenomaus* was Father of *Hippodame*. His Daughter was promiſed in Marriage to any one who ſhould excel him in a Chariot-Race; but the loſs of Victory was to be attended with immediate Death. The Skulls here mentioned, were thoſe of the eleven Suitors, who had failed in the Attempt.

Thus

Thus ſtrove in vain th' indignant Queen of Air,
And blended in her Speech Reproach and Prayer;
Unmov'd remains the Ruler of the Skies,
And thus with Calmneſs from his Throne replies.
'Twas thus I deem'd the Queen of Hea'vn would plead,
Whene'er the Fate of *Argos* was decreed:
Nor leſs might *Bacchus* thwart the Will of Fate,
Bacchus, the Guardian of the *Theban* State,
But he not dares the lifted Bolt to ſtay,
Reveres our Pow'r and gives the Vengeance Way.
For by thy Waves, tremendous *Styx!* that flow
Thro' the drear Realms of gliding Ghoſts below,
Not all the Gods, who reign in Heav'n above,
Shall change this fixt Decree, or influence *Jove*.
Thus have I ſworn, and what I ſwear, ſhall ſtand,
That none but *Jove* ſhall exerciſe Command.
Haſte then, my Son, our Orders to perform,
Mount the fleet Wind, and ride the rapid Storm,
To *Pluto*'s Realms with willing Haſte repair,
And ſummon *Laius* to the Fields of Air,
Whoſe ſhiv'ring Ghoſt with lifted Hands implores
A ſpeedy Paſſage to the farther Shores.

v. 401. *For by thy Waves*] This was the moſt cuſtomary Oath among the Gods, and the greateſt they could take; whatever had obtained the Sanction of it, was eſteemed inviolable.

Stygii per flumina fratris,
Per pice torrentes, atraque voragine ripas,
Annuit. Æn. 10. v. 13.

And again,

Adjuro Stygii caput implacabile fontis,
Una ſuperſtitio ſuperis quæ reddita divis. Lib. 12. v. 816.

v. 411. *Whoſe ſhiv'ring*] The Souls of the deceaſed wandered a

Let his proud Grandſon, taught by him, diſown
The mutual Compact, nor reſign the Crown
To baniſh'd *Polynices*, who relies
On *Tydeus*, and his Argive Sire's Supplies.
From hence ſhall ſpring the Seeds of mutual Hate,
The reſt ſhall follow in the Courſe of Fate.
Swift as the Word, the ſprightly Son of *May*
Prepares th' Almighty's Orders to obey.

hundred Years, before they were admitted to paſs the River *Styx*. *Virgil* introduces ſome departed Souls in the ſame State as *Laius*.

Stabant orantes primi tranſmittere curſum,
Tendebantque manus ripæ ulterioris amore. Æn. 6. v. 313.

v. 419. *Swift as the Word*] This Deſcription of *Mercury* is imitated from *Virgil*'s in the fourth Æneid, v. 238,

—— Ille patris magni parere parabat
Imperio: et primum pedibus talaria nectit
Aurea quæ ſublimem alis, ſive æquora ſupra,
Seu terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant.
Tum virgam capit: hac animas ille evocat orco
Pallentes, alias ſub triſtia Tartara mittit,
Dat ſomnos adimitque & lumina morte reſignat.

Who took it from *Homer*, Iliad, Lib. 24. Verſe 339.

Ὣς ἔφαθ', ὃδ' ἀπίθησε διάκτορος Ἀργειφόντης.
Αὐτίκ' ἔπειθ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
Ἀμβρόσια, χρύσεια, τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρὴν,
Ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν, ἅμα πνοιῆς ἀνέμοιο.
Εἵλετο δὲ ῥάβδον τῇ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει
Ὧν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ' αὖτε καὶ ὑπνώοντας ἐγείρει.

Taſſo has likewiſe improved it with many additional Images in his Deſcription of the Angel *Gabriel*, *Gierus*: Lib. Canto 1. Stanza 13.

Coſi parlògli, e *Gabriel* s' accinſe
Veloce ad eſſequir l' impoſte coſe.
La ſua forma inviſibil d' aria cinſe,
Ed al ſenſo mortal la ſottopoſe.
Umane membra, aſpetto uman finſe:
Mà di celeſte maeſtà il compoſe,
Trà giovane, e fanciullo età confine
Preſe, & ornò di raggi il biondo crine.

Ali

The glitt'ring Sandals to his Feet applies,
And to his Heels the well-trim'd Pinion ties.
His Hat's wide-ſpread Circumference confines
The ſtarry Radiance, that around him ſhines.
He graſps the Wand, which draws from hollow Graves,
Or drives the trembling Shades to *Stygian* Waves;
With magic Power ſeals the watchful Eye
In Slumbers ſoft, or cauſes Sleep to fly.
From the vaſt Height with ſwift Deſcent he ſprings;
(A ſlender Gale ſupports his ſteady Wings)
Then thro' th' etherial Void conſpicuous flew,
And a long Trail of Light behind him drew.
Mean while from *Thebes* the baniſh'd Hero roves
Thro' barren Tracts, and wide *Aonian* Groves;

Ali bianche veſtì, c' han d' or le cime
Infaticabilmente agili, e preſte:
Fende i venti, e le nubi, e va ſublime
Sovra la terra, e ſovra il mar con queſte:

Theſe are all inferior to *Milton*'s Deſcription of the Angel *Raphael*.

—— Six Wings he wore, to ſhade
His Lineaments divine; the Pair that clad
Each Shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his Breaſt
With regal Ornament; the middle Pair
Girt like a ſtarry Zone, his Waiſt and round
Skirted his Loins and Thighs, with downy Gold,
And Colours dip'd in Heav'n: the third his Feet
Shadow'd from either Heel with feather'd Mail,
Sky-tinctur'd Grain: like *Maia*'s Son he ſtood
And ſhook his Plumes, that heav'nly Fragrance fill'd
The Circuit wide. *Par. Loſt*, B. 5.

v. 433. *Mean while*] The Art of characterizing is perhaps leſs underſtood than any one Branch in the whole Province of Poetry: and indeed it may be alledged, that the Qualifications requiſite for it are acquired with great Difficulty, and can reſult only from the moſt penetrating Sagacity, joined to an intimate Acquaintance with and long Study of human Nature. Young Poets are apt to deſcribe Man, as he ought to be, and not as he is, never conſidering that a compleatly good Man is little leſs than a Monſter. Our Poet has

And while the flatt'ring Hopes of diſtant Sway
Chear the bleak Horrors of the tedious Way,
The partial Signs enlarge their heav'nly Space,
And the Sun ſeems to run a double Race:
His Cares ariſe with each revolving Ray,
And Night renews the Labours of the Day.
In Proſpect he prevents his future Joy,
And ſnatches at the viſionary Toy,
Surveys the glitt'ring Tow'rs of *Thebes* his own,
Or deals out Juſtice, from a fancied Throne.
Would Fate permit, he'd give an Age away,
And laviſh all on one luxurious Day:
Deſpair renews, now Hope diſpells his Gloom,
And fruitleſs Wiſhes all his Joys conſume.
The Prince at length reſolves to ſeek for Aid,
Where *Danaus* once th' *Inachian* Sceptre ſway'd,
From whence th' indignant Sun withdrew his Light,
And hid the Tyrant's Crimes in ſudden Night:
And now, impell'd by Furies, Chance or Fate,
He ruſh'd impetuous from the well-known Gate,
And quits the Caves, where howling Matrons toil,
And ſlaughter'd *Pentheus* fertiliz'd the Soil;
Then views from whence *Cithæron*'s leſs'ning Steep
Receives its Limits from th' adjoining Deep,
Or trembling hangs on *Scyron*'s noted Rock,
And from afar ſurveys the wat'ry Shock.

avoided this Defect, and always interſperſed the manly Conduct of his Heroes with ſome Spices of Folly and Weakneſs; nay he has ſometimes fallen into the other Extreme, and painted Men rather worſe than they really are.

v. 456. *And ſlaughter'd*] *Pentheus* was the Son of *Echion* and *Agave*; and torn to Pieces by his Mother and Siſters for deſpiſing the Rites of *Bacchus*.

To *Megara* the Warrior next repairs,
Fam'd for the Rape of *Niſus'* purple Hairs,
From thence the Straits of *Corinth* paſſes o'er,
And hears the Billows break on either Shore.
Now *Phœbus*, conſcious of exhauſted Light,
Reſigns his Empire to ſucceeding Night,
And riſing *Cynthia* thro' the Realms above
Her Dew-beſpangled Car in Silence drove.
All Things were huſh'd: Sleep quits the Fields of Air,
And ſteals upon the watchful Miſer's Care:
No future Toils alarm his peaceful Breaſt,
Steep'd in Oblivion, and conſign'd to Reſt.
Yet no red Cloud, edg'd with a golden Ray,
Foretold the glad Approach of haſt'ning Day,
No faint Reflection of the Sun invades
The Night, or glimmers on the leſs'ning Shades:
From Earth aſcending, thicker Vapours roll,
Form one black Miſt, and darken either Pole.
The Winds ariſe, and with tumultuous Rage
The gath'ring Horrors of the Storm preſage;

v. 465. *Now Phœbus*] This is an Imitation of that fine Deſcription in the fourth Book of *Virgil*'s Æneid, v. 522.

Nox erat, & placidum carpebant feſſa ſoporem
Corpora per terras, ſilvæque & ſæva quierant
Æquora; cum medio volvuntur ſidera lapſu,
Cum tacet omnis ager; pecudes, pictæque volucres,
Quæque lacus late liquidos, quæque aſpera dumis
Rura tenent, ſomno poſitæ ſub nocte ſilenti,
Lenibant curas, & corda oblita laborum.

But the *Curis inſerpit ſomnus avaris* is a Circumſtance, which *Virgil* has not taken notice of, and highly worth our Attention.

v. 477. *From Earth aſcending*] The Art of the Poet in working up this Deſcription deſerves our greateſt Applauſe. We are led Step by Step from one Degree of Horror to another, till all the Elements are put in Action, and the Storm is arrived at its greateſt Height.

And whilſt in Heav'n ſuperior Sway they claim,
Earth labours, and reſounds the ſtarry Frame.
But *Auſter* chiefly checks the breaking Light,
In Clouds incircled, and renews the Night;
Then opes the Sluices of the pregnant Sky,
And bids the Tempeſt from each Quarter fly,
Which the fierce North, ere finiſh'd was its Courſe,
Congeals to Show'rs of Hail with wond'rous Force.
The Thunder rolls, with Lightning Aether glows,
And burſting Clouds unweary'd Fires diſcloſe.
Now *Nemea*, now *Arcadia*'s cloud-capt Hills
Pour on the Subject Vales their murm'ring Rills.
His Waves in Troops old *Inachus* ſends forth,
And *Eraſinus*, riſing to the North.
Where late was Duſt, unnumber'd Billows roar,
And *Lerna* ſpews around its liquid Store:
Nor Art, nor Nature can the War ſuſtain;
Mounds fail, and Damms are interpos'd in vain.
Beneath its Force the talleſt Oaks give Way,
And gaping Groves admit a ſudden Day;
Roots, Leaves and Boughs are hurry'd o'er the Wood,
Float on the Waves, and ſwell the loaded Flood.
Meantime the *Theban* views with wond'ring Eyes
The rocky Ruin, that around him flies:
Now rural Cots, and Sheep-folds borne away
By the mad Whirlwind's unreſiſted Sway,
Then Show'r-fed Rivers from the Mountain's Height
Strike his quick Ear, and fill his Soul with Fright.
Yet not more ſlow, unknowing where he ſtrays,
The madding Youth thro' dark and trackleſs Ways
Purſues his Courſe: Fear follows cloſe behind,
And his ſtern Brother's Image haunts his Mind.

As

As fares a Mariner, when Storms arise,
And clouded *Phœbe* quits th' unwilling Skies,
Nor shines the Northern Wain: amid the Strife
Of Heav'n and Ocean, thoughtful for his Life,
And doubtful, whether to expect his Death
From Storms above, or Dangers underneath,
Starts at the Thunder, which around him rolls,
Or dreads Destruction from the neighb'ring Shoals.
Not less perplex'd, the *Theban* Warrior roves
Thro' shadow'y Thickets, and surrounding Groves.
In vain the Brambles his huge Shield oppose,
His Courage to his Toils superior rose;
Till now he views, where from *Larissa*'s Brow
The shelving Walls with Light reflected glow;
Thither he posts, and from *Prosymna*'s Plain
Surveys the sacred Grove, and *Juno*'s Fane;
And on the right fam'd *Lerna*'s Lake beheld,
Where fierce *Alcides* the fierce *Hydra* quell'd.
At length he pass'd the Gates, which open lay,
And to the royal Dome pursu'd his Way;
O'er the cold Marble then his Limbs he threw,
And sought in Sleep his Vigour to renew.
Adrastus o'er fair *Argos* Sway maintain'd,
And long in Peace the hoary Prince had reign'd;
He drew his Birth on both Sides from above,
And claim'd Alliance with Almighty *Jove*.
Fate would not with a manly Offspring crown
His nuptial Bed. Two Daughters heir'd his Throne,

v. 435. *Adrastus o'er*] The Character and Circumstances of *Adrastus* have a great Resemblance with those of *Latinus*. He has no Son, and receives an oracular Injunction concerning the Marriage of his Daughters.

To him *Apollo*, monſtrous to relate!
Diſclos'd the Secrets of unerring Fate,
And ſaid ——— expect thy Sons on *Argos'* Shore,
A tawny Lion, and a briſtling Boar.
Long this revolv'd within his tender Breaſt,
Engroſs'd his Thoughts, and broke his nightly Reſt;
Long ſage *Amphiaraus* eſſay'd in vain
This ſeeming Menace of the Gods t' explain,
At length perceiv'd the Pow'rs' ſuperior Will,
And Fate oppos'd to his predicting Skill.
Here *Tydeus*, by reſiſtleſs Fortune led,
From *Caledon*'s ſuſpected Vengeance fled,
And ſtrove, too conſcious of his Brother ſlain,
His People's Love by Abſence to regain.
Long ſought the toiling Chief a ſafe Retreat
From the rough Storm, till Chance directs his Feet
To the ſame Place, where, ſtretch'd upon the Ground,
The *Theban* Warrior a like Shelter found.
But Diſcord, ever fond of human Blood,
Forbids the Chiefs to plan each other's Good;
Nor ſuffers them beneath one Roof to ſhare
A common Shelter from th' inclement Air.
Awhile harſh Words, and mingled Threats delay
Th' alternate Labours of the bloody Fray:

v. 559. *But Diſcord*] We are now entering upon that Part which has done *Statius* ſo much Hurt in the Eyes of the Critics, and where we muſt leave him without offering a ſingle Word in his Defence. He has undoubtedly erred very much in the Choice of this Epiſode: not that the Peice itſelf, detached from the reſt of the Poem, is deſtitute of Merit, but becauſe it ſhould not have had a Place in the Epopœia, and eſpecially at this Juncture. It is remarkable, that Mr. *Pope* has omitted the whole in his Tranſlation of this Book: in my Opinion, the ſtrongeſt Proof of its unſeaſonable Inſertion.

Then

Then, of their Garments ſtrip'd, they both engage,
And mutual Blows ſucceed to mutual Rage.
With Youth and Stature fluſh'd, the *Theban* glows,
And on his lowly Rival deals his Blows;
But valiant *Tydeus*, tho' his dwarfiſh Size
Could promiſe little to the partial Eyes,
With greater Confidence aroſe to fight,
And Courage that diſown'd ſuperior Might.
With ſwift repeated Strokes their Hands fly round
Their Heads and Cheeks; their crackling Jaws reſound:
Thick as in War an Iron Tempeſt flies,
Or Hail, that quits in rattling Show'rs the Skies.
Thus, when the Trumpet's clanging Sound proclaims
The wiſh'd Renewal of th' Olympic Games,
When Clouds of Duſt from ev'ry Part aſcend,
And equal Chance ſuſpends th' impatient Friend,
The diff'rent Clamours of the Pit engage
The liſt'ning Rivals, and provoke their Rage,
While, from afar each partial Mother eyes
The Conteſt, and foredooms her Son the Prize.
Thus Hatred, not Deſire of Praiſe provokes
The ſprightly Chiefs, and arms their heavy Strokes.
Their Eyes ſtart inward from beneath each Blow,
And from their Faces bloody Currents flow.
Now had each vig'rous Candidate for Fame
With flaming Sword renew'd his double Claim,
And the proud *Theban*, ſtretch'd beneath the Hand
Of *Tydeus*, dy'd with Gore a foreign Strand;

v. 569. *Tho' his dwarfiſh Size*] The dwarfiſh Size and Stature of *Tydeus* are taken notice of alſo by *Homer*, in *Minerva*'s Speech to *Diomede*. Il. B. 5. V. 800.

Ἦ ὀλίγον σ' ἐδάιδα ἰοικότα γείνατο Τυδεὺς,
Τυδεύς τοι μικρὸς μὲν ἔην δέμας, ἀλλὰ μαχητής,

But

But old *Adraſtus*, who with Cares oppreſs'd,
Sigh'd for the diſtant Joys of balmy Reſt,
With Wonder heard th' unwonted Clamours riſe,
And deep-fetch'd Groans, that eccho'd thro' the Skies.
But when, *Aurora* bringing back the Day,
Thro' the wide op'ning Gates he took his Way,
And ſaw their manly Features rough with Blood,
And their gaſh'd Cheeks emit a Crimſon Flood,
He thus exclaims.——Say, what provokes your Rage,
O foreign Youths, and why ye thus engage?
(For ſure my Subjects would not dare to ſtain
My Courts with Blood, and *Cynthia*'s Rule prophane)
Say, is the Day too ſcanty, or the Night
Once ſacred to Repoſe, reſerv'd for Fight?
But come, your Country, Birth, and Names relate,
Say, whither bound, and whence this mutual Hate?
For ſuch high Spirit, and Reſentment ſhows
A Breaſt, that with no common Ardour glows,
And in that Stream of Honour we may trace
A gen'rous Birth, and more than vulgar Race.
Scarce had he ſpoke, when in a mingled Din
The Chiefs abaſh'd with mutual Shame, begin:
Uſeleſs are Words, O King, when Wounds diſplay
The bloody Labours of this caſual Fray.

v. 605. *Say, is the Day*] To ſay that this Part of *Adraſtus*'s Conduct is copied from that of *Evander* on a ſimilar Occaſion, is to tell the Reader what he muſt know already. Both Princes are engaged in performing their annual Vows to the Gods, when the Strangers arrive in their Territories, and both give an Account of the Riſe of the Solemnities: but if general Obſervations ſhould fail of confirming what I have advanced, the Paſſages from *Virgil*, which I ſhall quote as they occur, will ſufficiently juſtify it.

In

In vain they ſtrive, while mutual Scoffs confound
Their diff'rent Accents, and perplex the Sound,
Till glowing with the Proſpect of Relief,
Intrepid *Tydeus* thus imparts his Grief.
From fam'd *Ætolia*'s Monſter-bearing Plains
I ſtray'd an Exile, till in your Domains
The Night my Progreſs check'd: and ſhall he dare
Deny me Shelter from th' inclement Air,
Becauſe he firſt obtain'd a ſafe Retreat
Beneath this Roof, and hoſpitable Seat?
Shall Man alone, by boaſted Reaſon led,
Refuſe to ſhare with Man the ſocial Bed,
When fiercer *Cyclops* live in mutual Peace,
And Fights between the ſtabled *Centaurs* ceaſe.
E'en rav'ning Brutes defend the common Cauſe,
Nor deviate thus from Nature's ſacred Laws.
But why this Flow of Words? this fatal Morn
Shall ſee my bloody Spoils in Triumph borne,
Or ſhould my Breaſt with equal Vigour glow,
Nor my briſk Blood forget, as erſt, to flow,
This Arm ſhall ſoon diſplay my lineal Fire,
And prove me worthy my celeſtial Sire.
Nor ſhall the Want of martial Heat diſgrace
(The *Theban* Prince replies) my godlike Race,
For conſcious Pride forbad him yet to own
His wretched Sire, and claim the *Theban* Crown.
To them the King.—This cauſeleſs Strife ſurceas'd,
Advance, and with us ſhare the ſolemn Feaſt.

v. 644. *Advance and with us*] *Evander* invites *Æneas* in like Manner. Æneid, B. 8. V. 172.

Interea ſacra hæc, quando huc veniſtis, amici,
Annua,

But firſt reſign your Threats, and Rage of Blood
To mutual Love, and Cares of mutual Good;
And let your Hands, in ſacred Union join'd,
Atteſt the fixt Intentions of the Mind.
For ſome myſterious Cauſe was this decreed,
Nor are the Gods, unconſcious of the Deed.
Perhaps, when Length of Time has ſeal'd the Vow,
And your firm Hearts with holy Friendſhip glow,
With Joy you may review the bloody Fray,
Nor bluſh to trace this e'er auſpicious Day.
Thus *Jove*'s Decree, unconſcious, he foreſhows;
The Sequel far tranſcends his warmeſt Vows:
For *Pylades* was not more known to Fame,
Nor *Theſeus*, burning with an equal Flame,
Tho' to redeem his bold Companion loſt,
He brav'd the Dangers of the *Stygian* Coaſt.
At length, the Chiefs to Reaſon yield the Sway,
And the ſage Dictates of the King obey:
An Air of mutual Friendſhip they aſſume,
And enter, Hand in Hand, the ſpacious Room.

Annua, quæ differre nefas, celebrate faventes
Nobiſcum, & jam nunc ſociorum aſſueſcite menſis.

v. 657. *For* Pylades] The Friendſhip of *Pylades* and *Oreſtes* was ſo ſtrong, that when *Oreſtes* was ſent for to be put to Death, *Pylades* ſaid he was *Oreſtes* to preſerve his Friend, and *Oreſtes* (as the Truth was) avouched himſelf to be the Man, that his Friend might not for his ſake loſe his Life, whence their Names are made a Proverb, to ſignify unfeigned Friends.

v. 569. *Tho' to redeem*] The Companion of *Theſeus* was *Pirithous*, who going to Hell in queſt of *Proſerpine*, whom he had vowed to enjoy, was ſlain by *Cerberus*. *Theſeus*, miſſing his Comrade, and concluding where he was gone, repaired to the infernal Regions likewiſe, but was taken Priſoner by the ſame Monſter, and detained in Chains, till *Hercules* came and delivered him.

Thus

Thus when the Ruler of the ſtormy Main
Is pleas'd the Tempeſt's Fury to reſtrain,
The Winds, abating, ſmoothe the Veſſel's Courſe,
And on the ſlack'ning Sails exhauſt their Force.
Here firſt the Monarch, fix'd in deep Amaze,
The Dreſs and Arms of either Gueſt ſurveys.
A Lion's tawny Hide the *Theban* wore
(Such grac'd the godlike *Hercules* of yore,
Ere *Nemea*'s Boaſt reſign'd his ſhaggy Spoils,
To deck his Shoulders, and reward his Toils)
Th' *Ætolian* Monſter's Pride young *Tydeus* bears,
Horrid with Tuſks, and rough with briſtling Hairs.
The hoary Chief, aſtoniſh'd to behold
Th' Events, by *Phœbus*' Oracles foretold,
Acknowledges with Joy the Voice of Heav'n,
And Anſwers, from the vocal Cavern giv'n.
Then to the Skies he lifts his grateful Hands,
And thus the future Aid of Night demands,
(While thro' each Vein myſterious Tranſports roll,
And awful Pleaſure thrills thro' all his Soul.)
O gloomy Queen of Shades, whoſe ebon Throne
The ſparkling Gems of Heav'n in Order crown,
Beneath whoſe Reign indulgent Sleep repairs
The buſy World, and buries mortal Cares,
Till riſing *Sol* warms *India*'s fragrant Soil,
And with his Rays renews our daily Toil;
Whoſe Aid alone could free the doubtful Way,
And the dark Fates diſcloſe to ſudden Day;
O ſpeed my Cauſe, nor let me ſtill complain
Of lying Oracles, and Omens vain:
So ſhall our Sons renew theſe Rites divine
For Ages hence at this thy honour'd Shrine,

And

And while the Prieſts thy ſacred Name invoke,
Black Sheep cull'd out, ſhall fall beneath their Stroke,
In curling Spires the ſable Smoke ſhall riſe,
And waft its grateful Odours to the Skies.
Hail, antient *Tripods*, and ye dark Abodes!
Exult we, Fortune, for th' acknowledg'd Gods,
Whoſe tutelary Pow'r with Joy I own,
And you, O long deſired to heir my Throne.
He ſpoke, and with the Princes bent his Way
To th' inner Court, impatient of Delay,
Where yet thin Fumes a fainty Odour yield,
And mould'ring Embers dying Sparks conceal'd.
He then enjoins his Servants to repair
The Fire, and make the genial Feaſt their Care.
Swift at the Word they run: the Court replies
To ev'ry Voice, and ecchoes back their Cries.
With *Tyrian* Carpets this adorns the Ground,
That ſmooths the Beds with Gold and Purple crown'd;
While ſome the Tables range, count ev'ry Gueſt,
And artfully adjuſt the future Feaſt;
Others with ſalted Entrails heap the Fire,
And bid the Flames from ev'ry Part aſpire.
From gilded Roofs depending, Lamps diſplay
Nocturnal Beams, and emulate the Day:
The Caniſters are pil'd with *Ceres'* Spoils,
And the King views with Joy their Rival-Toils.
On Tapeſtry reclin'd, *Adraſtus* ſhone
Afar conſpicuous, from his Iv'ry Throne;
A broider'd Couch ſupports the foreign Gueſts,
Nor Love of Diſcord longer fires their Breaſts.
The Monarch bids *Aceſte* then appear,
And whiſpers his Injunctions in her Ear,

Whoſe bright Example had to Virtue train'd
His Daughters, and preſerv'd their Fame unſtain'd.
The Nymphs the Summons of their Sire attend,
And to the Hall their Steps obſequious bend:
Minerva's Features, and *Diana*'s Grace
Conſpir'd to ſtamp Perfection on their Face.
But as in Proſpect they perus'd the Feaſt,
And met the Glances of each unknown Gueſt,
In Bluſhes they reveal'd the firſt Surprize,
And to their Sire recall'd their wand'ring Eyes,
While gath'ring Shame their conſcious Face o'erſpread,
Varying their Cheeks by Turns with white and red.
But when the Rage of Hunger was repreſs'd,
The Meat remov'd, and ſatiate ev'ry Gueſt,
A Goblet in the midſt *Adraſtus* plac'd,
With ſculptur'd Gold, and glitt'ring Figures grac'd,
In which his Anceſtors were wont to pour
Libations, and indulge the genial Hour.
Here fraught with Gorgon's Spoils, the winged Horſe
O'er Heav'n's Expanſe was ſeen to ſtretch his Courſe,
While ſhe her Eyes in dying Motions roll'd,
Her Paleneſs imag'd in th' impaſſion'd Gold.
There the commiſſion'd Eagle ſeems to bear
The *Phrygian* Youth thro' Tracts of yielding Air.

v. 751. *There the commiſſion'd*] *Virgil* relates the ſame Story, with ſimilar Circumſtances, as deſcribed in a Piece of Embroidery.

> Intextusque puer frondoſâ regius Idâ
> Veloces jaculo cervos curſuque fatigat,
> Acer, anhelanti ſimilis; quem præpes ab Idâ
> Sublimem pedibus rapuit *Jovis* armiger uncis.
> Longævi palmas nequicquam ad ſidera tendunt
> Cuſtodes, ſævitque canum latratus ad auras.
>
> Æneid, Book 5. V. 252.

Proud

Proud *Ida*'s Summit leſſens to his Sight,
And *Troy* rolls back beneath his riſing Flight;
While his ſad Comrades on the crowded Coaſt
View both in Clouds of ambient Æther loſt,
And each lov'd Hound, in deeper Notes of Woe,
Demands his Maſter of th' unheeding Foe.
This old *Adraſtus* fills with ſacred Wine,
And then in Pray'r invokes the Pow'rs divine:
But *Phœbus*, firſt of the celeſtial Train,
Receives the myſtic Off'rings of the Fane;
Him with united Shouts the Crowd demands,
And waves the flow'ring Branches in their Hands;
For him this annual Sacrifice prepares,
While with inceſſant Flames each Altar glares.
Then thus the King.—Perhaps theſe Youths would know,
What claims this ſtrict Obſervance of our Vow;
And why the pious Sons of *Argos* pay
Such ſpecial Honours to the God of Day.
No ſuperſtitious Zeal our Sires impell'd
To conſtitute theſe Rites, which you've beheld.
But when and whence theſe ſolemn Cuſtoms roſe,
(So ye but lend Attention,) I'll diſcloſe.
When now the *Python* had by *Phœbus* bled,
And with his Bulk the *Delphic* Plain o'erſpread,

v. 771. *No ſuperſtitious*] So *Evander* in the eighth Book of the Æneid, Verſe 185.

——Non hæc ſolennia nobis
Has ex more dapes, hanc tanti numinis aram,
Vana ſuperſtitio, veterumque ignara Deorum
Impoſuit.

v. 775. *When now the* Python] The *Python* was a huge Serpent, ſo called from Πυθεῖν, to *rot*; becauſe he was reported to ariſe from the Rottenneſs of the Earth after the Deluge. *Juno* ſent him to vex *Latona*, who was then with Child by *Jupiter*: but the Goddeſs flying

(As hanging o'er the fair *Caſtalian* Flood)
He fills his turgid Maw with noxious Food.
To th' Argive Court repair'd the Victor-God,
And with his Preſence honour'd our Abode.
The King *Crotopus* (as the Fates decreed)
Was bleſt with no Male-Iſſue to ſucceed:
A Nymph, unmatch'd in Manners as in Face,
Was the ſole Product of his firſt Embrace:
Thrice happy Maid! had *Phœbus* fail'd to move
Her tender Breaſt, nor kindled mutual Love:
For by th' enamour'd God compreſs'd, ſhe bore
A godlike Son on *Nemea*'s winding Shore,
Ere the tenth Moon had with her borrow'd Light
Supply'd the Want of Day, and rul'd the Night.
For this conſtrain'd to quit her native Place,
And ſhun approaching Vengeance and Diſgrace,
Among the ruſtic Swains ſhe ſeeks a Friend,
To whom ſhe might her precious Charge commend.
The wretched Babe, beneath an homely Shed
With bleating Lambkins ſhares a common Bed;
While with the Pipe his Foſter-Father tries
To ſoothe his Plaints, and cloſe his Infant-Eyes.

flying to *Aſteria*, her Siſter, was protected till *Apollo* grew up; who killed the Monſter; for which the *Macedonians* inſtituted the *Pythian* Games.

v. 775. *When now*] This is a very fine Epiſode, and in my Opinion, ſuperior to that of *Cacus* in the eighth Book of the Æneid. When I ſay ſuperior, I would not be underſtood to mean, that this of *Statius* is better executed: but that it abounds with a greater Variety of Matter, and conſequently requires leſs Art of the Poet to render it compleat. The Deſcription of *Pſamathe* and her Child's unhappy Fate, and the patriotic Behaviour of *Choræbus* are Maſterpieces in their Kind, and cannot fail of affording the Reader the higheſt Satisfaction. Give me Leave to add, that when the Subject is ſo circumſtanced as in the preſent Caſe, though the Poet's Art ſhould be equal: yet that Epiſode, which contains the greateſt Variety of Incidents, will always have the Preference.

Hard was his Lot. ——Yet ſtill relentleſs Fate
Forbad him to enjoy his poor Retreat:
For while abandon'd to blind Fortune's Care,
Beneath the Shade he breathes the Morning Air,
The furious Dogs his tender Carcaſe tore,
And fed luxurious on the recent Gore.
But when the Tidings reach'd the Mother's Ears,
Unmindful of her former Shame and Fears,
She raves, the Palace fills with piercing Cries,
Nor ſhuns her Father's once-avoided Eyes:
Then hears, impatient of her vital Breath,
The fatal Sentence, and demands her Death.
But *Phœbus*, mindful of his ſtol'n Embrace,
Prepares t' avenge her Suff'rings and Diſgrace,
And bids aſcend, to plague the guilty Earth,
A horrid Monſter of infernal Birth:
Her Face and Breaſt a female Form diſcloſe,
But from her Head a creſted Serpent roſe,
Whoſe hideous Length diſparts her livid Brows,
And from afar with dreadful Splendour glows.
When fav'ring Night the buſy World o'erſpreads,
She roams the Streets, or haunts the Childrens Beds,
Conſigns to *Pluto*, and a ſudden Night
Thoſe new-born Babes, who ſcarce had ſeen the Light,
And, unreſiſted by the heartleſs Foe,
Thrives, and collects freſh Strength from public Woe.
With Grief *Chorœbus* ey'd the waſteful Peſt,
And gen'rous Rage inflam'd his Patriot Breaſt;
To ſome few choſen Youths, who Life diſclaim,
And think it overſold to purchaſe Fame,

v. 827. *Who Life diſclaim*] This Expreſſion is made uſe of by *Virgil*.

Eſt

He pleads his Country's Cauſe, and undiſmay'd
Extorts a Promiſe of united Aid.
Theſe ſoon deſcry'd her, fir'd with vengeful Hate,
Where the broad Path, divided, fronts the Gate:
Two Infants, borne from ſome unguarded Dome,
Hang at her Side, unconſcious, what's to come,
Till her ſharp Claws explore their inner Parts,
And ſeek the neareſt Paſſage to their Hearts.
So ſad a Sight *Chorœbus* could not bear,
But buried in her Breaſt his ruſhing Spear.
The Springs of Life emit their crimſon Store,
And thro' the Gap, diſcharg'd in iſſuing Gore,
Her Soul reviſits the *Tartarean* Coaſt,
And native *Styx*,—a lonely, dreaded Ghoſt.
Eager they preſs to view the Monſter's Eyes
Livid in Death, her Womb's enormous Size,
And Breaſts more filthy with the clotted Blood
Of *Grecian* Babes.——The Youths of *Argos* ſtood
In Wonder loſt; and to their recent Tears
Great Joys ſucceed, but Joys appall'd with Fears.
Their ſole Vexation now remains to find
Their Rage exhauſted, their Revenge confin'd.
Some ſeem'd diſpleas'd, they can no longer kill,
And wiſh their Pow'r was equal to their Will:
Whilſt others mangling her deteſted Corſe
With furious Zeal her Limbs aſunder force.

Eſt hic, eſt animus lucis contemptor, et iſtum,
Qui vitâ bene credat emi, quò tendis, honorem.
Æneid, V. 206, B. 9.

And by *Taſſo* with little Variation,

Ho core anch' io, che morte ſprezza, e crede
Che ben ſi cambi con l'onor la vita.
Gierus. Lib. Canto 12. Stanza 8.

To diſtant Rooſts the Birds of Night repair,
And ſhriek, impatient of the ſcented Air:
E'en hungry Dogs, and Monſters of the Wood,
Start from the Sight, and loathe the direful Food.
This but increas'd *Apollo*'s former Hate,
And urg'd him to revenge the Monſter's Fate.
From cleft *Parnaſſus*' Heights He bent his Bow,
And hurl'd his Vengeance on the Realms below.
Around the God unnumber'd Miſchiefs wait,
And ev'ry Shaft contains reſiſtleſs Fate.
While o'er th' Horizon gath'ring Clouds ariſe,
Fraught with Deſtruction, and infect the Skies.
Death cuts the fatal Siſters' Threads in Haſte,
And the diſpeopled City ſoon lays waſte.
But *Phœbus* aſk'd, from what myſterious Source
Sirius deriv'd ſuch unreſiſted Force,
Demands thoſe Youths, whoſe Hands in Duſt had laid
The Monſter's Pride, to glut her vengeful Shade.
Thrice happy Warrior! may thy Worth be crown'd
With Fame, nor Length of Time thy Glory bound;
Who, nobly laviſh of thy vital Breath,
Diſdain'ſt to ſhun inevitable Death:

v. 859. *This but increas'd*] It will not perhaps be diſpleaſing to the Reader, if I ſubjoin the following Paſſage from *Homer*, to give him an Opportunity of comparing it with what he has juſt read.

Ὣς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος. τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.
Βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων χωόμενος κῆρ,
Τόξ' ὤμοισιν ἔχων, ἀμφηρεφέα τε φαρέτρην.
Ἔκλαγξαν δ' ἄρ' ὀϊστοὶ ἐπ' ὤμων χωομένοιο,
Αὐτῇ κινηθείσῃ. ὁ δ' ἤϊε νυκτὶ ἐοικώς.
Ἕζετ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνευθε νεῶν, μετὰ δ' ἰὸν ἕηκε.
Δεινὴ δὴ κλαγγὴ γένετ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο.
Οὐρῆας μὲν πρῶτον ἐπῴχετο, καὶ κύνας ἀργούς.
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλος ἐχεπευκὲς ἀφιεὶς,
Βαλλ'. αἰεὶ δὲ πυραὶ νεκύων καίοντο θαμειαί. Iliad, L. 1. V. 43.

And

And, ruſhing to the Temple, durſt provoke
The raging God, and thus demand the Stroke.
Think not Deſire of Life, or public Force
Hath to thy Fane, O *Phœbus*, urg'd my Courſe:
With conſcious Virtue arm'd, thy Will I wait,
To ſave my Country, and avert its Fate.
Behold the Man, who durſt in Fight engage
His Country's Peſt, and bound its waſteful Rage:
Whom to revenge, the Sun withheld its Light,
And wrapt the Skies in peſtilential Night.
But if ſuch horrid Scenes thy Thoughts employ,
And Death and Slaughter are thy ſavage Joy;
If Man no more muſt thy Protection claim,
Since the Fiend's Death has fann'd thy vengeful Flame;
Yet why ſhou'd *Argos* for my Crimes atone,
And ſhare the Vengeance due to me alone?
Let me be deem'd the hateful Cauſe of all,
And ſuffer, rather than my Country fall;
Unleſs you view with Joy our deſert Town,
And fun'ral Flames, unrivall'd by your own.
But why do I the fatal Dart arreſt,
And torture with Suſpenſe each Matron's Breaſt?
Then fit the Arrow to the well-ſtrung Bow,
And ſend me glorying to the Shades below.

v. 891. *Yet why ſhould* Argos] *Taſſo* has put the ſame noble Sentiment in the Mouth of *Sophronia*, but with an additional Beauty of Expreſſion.

——E giuſto, eſſer à mi conviene
Se fui ſola al' onor, ſola alle pene,

And a little lower,

A me l' Onor, la morte à me ſi deve,
Non s' uſurpi coſtei le pene mie.

Gierusalem, Lib. Canto 2.

But, ere the Fates ſuppreſs my vital Breath,
Grant me to ſee (ſome Solace in my Death)
The Plague in unoffending *Argos* ceaſe,
And exil'd Health reſtor'd again to *Greece*.
Fortune conſigns the Coward to the Grave,
But for his Country's Sake preſerves the Brave.
Relenting *Phœbus* quits his angry Bow,
And bluſhing longer to remain a Foe,
With Rev'rence bids th' unwilling Patriot live,
And Health and Peace in ſorrowing *Greece* revive.
From that auſpicious Day with Rites divine,
We worſhip at *Apollo*'s honour'd Shrine:
Such annual Feaſts his temp'rate Rays require,
And thus we ſhun the God's returning Ire.
But ſay, illuſtrious Youth, from whence you came,
From whence derive your Birth, and what's your Claim?
Since the brave Son of *Oeneus* ſtands confeſt,
A welcome Neighbour, and more welcome Gueſt,
And the full Bowl, and ſilent Hours invite
With various Converſe to contract the Night.
A riſing Bluſh o'erſpreads the *Theban* Chief,
Yet glowing with the Proſpect of Relief,
Prone to the Earth he fix'd his gloomy Eyes,
And with a previous Sigh at length replies.
Before theſe Altars how ſhall I reveal,
What conſcious Shame injoins me to conceal?
Too happy! was my Fortune not more known
To Fame than you, or known to you alone.
But ſince you take ſuch Int'reſt in my Woe,
And the diſaſt'rous Tale deſire to know,
Learn, that from *Cadmus* by Deſcent I come,
Jocaſta's Son, and *Thebes* my native Home.

Adraſtus,

Adraſtus, touch'd with his unhappy Fate,
Replies. —— Forbear the Sequel to relate:
Nor think us Strangers to the *Theban* Name,
Or deaf to the divulging Voice of Fame.
E'en thoſe who freeze beneath the Northern Pole,
Or view the ſwelling Waves of *Ganges* roll,
Who live, where Ocean bounds th' *Heſperian* Lands,
Or dread the Depth of *Lybia*'s burning Sands:
All theſe have known the Fury's vengeful Ire,
And the raſh Actions of your wretched Sire.
But if the Son re-acts the Father's Crimes,
And ſhares the lineal Guilt of former Times,
How curſt am I, on whoſe unhappy Race
The Feaſt of *Tantalus* entail'd Diſgrace!
Be this thy Study then, with inbred Worth
T' efface the Stains coeval with thy Birth.
But ſee pale *Cynthia* quits th' etherial Plains,
And of Night's Empire but a third remains;
With Wine then let the ſprinkled Altars blaze,
And joyful Pæans ſwell the Note of Praiſe.
O *Phœbus*, Author of the riſing Day,
Whether thy *Lycian* Mountains court thy Stay,
Or fair *Caſtalia*'s Current claims thy Care,
Where oft thou joy'ſt to bathe thy golden Hair:
Whether proud *Troy* detains thee on her Strands,
Rear'd by the Labour of celeſtial Hands:
Or, pleas'd to ſeek thy native Iſle no more,
Thy genial Preſence gilds the *Cynthian* Shore;
Whoſe graceful Hand ſupports the fatal Bow,
And darts Deſtruction on the furious Foe.

v. 957. *Whether proud Troy*] *Troy* was built by the joint Labour of *Neptune* and *Apollo*: Hence *Horace* ſays,

Ter ſi reſurgat murus aheneus
Auctore *Phœbo* &c. Lib. 3. Ode 3.

In vain old Age aſſaults thy beardleſs Face,
Crown'd with freſh Beauty, and perennial Grace.
'Tis thine to warn us with unerring Skill
Of Heav'n's Decrees, and *Jove*'s reſiſtleſs Will;
To teach, from whence the Torch of Diſcord ſprings,
The Change of Sceptres, and the Fate of Kings.
Thy Shafts allay'd fierce *Tityos*' lawleſs Luſt,
And humbled haughty *Marſyas* to the Duſt,
(Who durſt aſpire to match thy ſacred Lays)
And from the *Python* reap'd immortal Praiſe:
Thy Pow'r transform'd proud *Niobe* to Stone,
And to *Latona*'s Charms adjudg'd the Crown:
Megæra, fierceſt Fiend, at thy Command
For e'er incumbent, ſhakes her vengeful Brand
O'er the devoted Head of the raſh Sire,
Who wrapt the *Delphic* Fane in impious Fire,
He views the proffer'd Food, yet dares not taſte,
And dreads the cavern'd Rock above him plac'd.
Let then our Fields thy conſtant Influence ſhare,
And *Argos*, ſacred to the Queen of Air;
Whether the Name of *Titan* pleaſe thee moſt,
A Name rever'd on th' *Achæmenian* Coaſt,
Or great *Oſiris*, whom the *Pharian* Swain
Decks with the Firſt-Fruits of the ripen'd Grain:
Or *Mitra* more, to whoſe prolific Rays
The grateful *Perſian* Adoration pays,
Who graſps the Horns of the reluctant Steer,
While on his Head encircling Lights appear.

v. 987. *Or* Mitra more] The *Perſians* call the Sun *Mitra*, account him the greateſt of their Gods, and worſhip him in a Cave. His Statue has the Head of a Lion, on which a Turbant, called *Tiara*, is placed. It is clothed with *Perſian* Attire, and holds with both Hands a ſtruggling Heifer.

End of Book I.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE SECOND.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS Book opens with a Deſcription of Mercury's *Return from* Hell, *purſuant to the Commands of* Jove, *as delivered in the firſt Book.* Laius *appears to* Eteocles, *and to make the greater Impreſſion upon his Mind, aſſumes the Form of* Tireſias. *The* Theban *King perſiſts in withholding the Crown from his Brother. The Poet then tranſports us to* Argos, *and relates the Marriage of the two Heroes to* Adraſtus's *Daughters, by which a triple Alliance is formed between* Adraſtus, Tydeus, *and* Polynices. *The Nuptials are interrupted by an inauſpicious Omen; the Cauſe of which is attributed to* Argia's *wearing the Necklace of* Harmonia. Tydeus *is deputed Embaſſador to claim the Crown of* Eteocles; *but meeting with a Repulſe, denounces War againſt him. The Tyrant hires fifty Ruffians to aſſaſſinate him in his Way to* Argos. *Theſe are ſlain all but one, whom he ſpares to carry the News to* Thebes. *The Hero flushed with his Succeſs, would have ventured himſelf among his Enemies there, but* Minerva *interpoſes; to whom he raiſes a Trophy of the Spoils, and prefers a Prayer, which concludes the Book.*

THE THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE SECOND.

NOW *Hermes*, fraught with the Commands of *Jove*,
With Wings expanded ſeeks the Realms above.
Black Miſts ſurround him, and impervious Night
Checks his bold Progreſs, and controuls his Flight;
No Zephyrs waft him o'er the Realms below,
But ſtill and noiſome Gales —— on one Side, flow
The branching Streams of *Styx* in calm Repoſe,
On t'other, fiery Lakes his Way oppoſe.
Prop'd on the Wand divine, old *Laius'* Shade
Stalks ſlow behind him; for the forceful Blade
Thro' his pierc'd Ribs an eaſy Paſſage found,
Till Point and Hilt had clos'd the gaping Wound.
Amaz'd the dreary Grove and penſive Glades
Survey his Paſſage from th' infernal Shades,
While flitting Spectres eye the King's Return
With ſullen Grief, and their Confinement mourn:
For, like the Soul, pale Envy braves the Tomb,
Nor with the Body ſhares an equal Doom.

Verſe 1. Now *Hermes*] The Beginning of this Book is really valuable, as it throws conſiderable Light on the Heathen Mythology, and the Notions they entertained of a future State.

v. 17. *For, like the Soul*] This Opinion of the Paſſions inhering after Death in the Souls of Men is confirmed by *Virgil.*

——Qua

But one, who ſickens at another's Joy,
Prone to inſult, and eager to deſtroy,
With borrow'd Smile old *Laius* thus addreſs'd,
While rankling Malice ſwell'd his envious Breaſt.
Thrice happy Shade! (whether propitious *Jove*
Enjoins thy Preſence in the Realms above,
Or madd'ning Fury, or prophetic Maid
Forbids thy Stay in this deteſted Shade)
Could'ſt thou enjoy the Sun's enliv'ning Beam,
The flow'ry Mead, clear Skies, and chryſtal Stream,
But ſoon alas! more ſorrowing thoul't return,
And with retorted Eye thoſe Pleaſures mourn.
He paus'd: for *Cerberus* began to rear
His angry Snakes, and arm'd his briſtling Hair;

Quæ gratia currûm,
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Paſcere equos, eadem ſequitur tellure repoſtos.
Æn, Lib. 6. Ver. 653.

v. 19. *But one who ſickens*]
Sed videt ingratos, intabeſcitque videndo
Succeſſus hominum. — *Ovid*'s Metam. Lib. 2.

It appears from this Paſſage of *Statius*, that the Souls of the deceaſed were not ſo thoroughly weaned from the Pleaſures of the World, as to be averſe to a Return; but the moſt probable Conjecture we can form is, that they had not undergone the Purgation mentioned by *Virgil*.

Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum
Supplicia expendunt, — Æn. Lib. 6. V. 739.

v. 31. *He paus'd*]
Cerberus hæc ingens latratu regna trifauci
Perſonat, adverſo recubans immanis in antro.
Cui vates, horrere videns jam colla colubris,
Melle ſoporatam et medicatis frugibus offam
Objicit, ille fame rabidâ tria guttura pandens,
Corripit objectam, atque immania terga reſolvit
Fuſus humi, totoque ingens extenditur antro.
Virg. Æn. B. V. v. 417.

Sternly

Sternly he yawn'd: th' advancing Ghoſts retire,
Nor dare withſtand the Monſter's threat'ned Ire.
But *Hermes* with his Wand *Lethæan* clos'd
His watchful Eyes, and a ſhort Truce impos'd.
A Steep there is, fam'd *Tænaros* by Name,
Whoſe equal Summit joins the ſtarry Frame.
Calm from its Height it hears the Tempeſt blow,
And views, ſecure, the breaking Surge below.
Here hoarſe Winds, lull'd in gentle Slumbers, lie,
And hurl'd from hence, the red-wing'd Lightnings fly.
Collected Miſts its flinty Sides ſurround,
Nor hears its Head the diſtant Thunder's Sound.
But when the Day declines, its length'ning Steep
O'erhangs the Waves, and ſhades the middle Deep.
The crooked Shore too forms an inner Bay,
Where inoffenſively the Billows play.
The Steeds of *Neptune* here ſecurely feed,
Of Fiſh and Courſer a promiſcuous Breed.
This winding Path (*Arcadia*'s Sons report)
Conveys the damn'd to *Pluto*'s gloomy Court.
Here oft are heard deep Groans, tumultuous Cries,
And loud Laments, that rend the vaulted Skies;
Grim *Cerb'rus* howls; the Furies drag their Chains,
And the ſcar'd Hinds retreat to diſtant Plains.
This Way, involv'd in Shades of ſable Night,
Great *Hermes* takes, and ſteers to Heav'n his Flight.
He ſhakes the Miſts infernal from his Face,
And the freſh Air renews his ev'ry Grace.
Then thro' the Regions of the frozen North
He ſails with ſteady Wings.—Sleep, ſallying forth
In Night's dim Car, extend's o'er all his Sway:
Both met, but Sleep reſign'd the ſhining Way.

Beneath

Beneath the God the Phantom flits, deſcries
His native Country, and long-raviſh'd Skies,
And now ſurveys aſpiring *Cyrrha*'s Brow,
And the ſtain'd Fields of *Phocis* far below.
But as he glanc'd, where his own Palace ſtood,
And Chariot ſtill diſcolour'd with his Blood,
He deeply groan'd: recoiling Nature ſtrove
With Duty, and diſputes the Will of *Jove.*
In vain *Cyllenius* waves his iv'ry Wand,
He halts, regardleſs of the God's Command.
'Twas the Decline of that revolving Ray,
Which firſt gave *Bacchus* to the Realms of Day,
When joyous Revels chace the drowſy Night,
Nor ceaſe, till *Sol* reſtores his abſent Light.
With Glee the *Thebans* (Part in open Field,
And Part at Home) their ſparkling Goblets wield.
Between each Draught the Pipes, the Cymbals ſound,
And Muſic's ſoft Delights the Banquet crown'd.
From glad *Cithæron* too the Matrons throng,
Inſpir'd by milder *Bacchus*, ruſh along.
The *Thracians* thus on *Oſſa*'s Pine-crown'd Height,
Or *Rhodope* indulge the feſtive Rite;
In Luxury they ſnatch the Lion's Food,
And with new Milk correct the Draught of Blood:
But if the Strength of Wine excite their Rage,
Cups claſh with Cups, and Stones with Stones engage,
Nor ends the Conflict, till from many a Wound
Black Streams of ſocial Gore diſtain the Ground.

v. 85. *The* Thracians *thus*] This Account of the *Thracians* is confirmed by the concurring Teſtimony of ſeveral Hiſtorians, and particularly that of *Herodotus*.

Such

Such was the Night, when with deſcending Wing
Fam'd *Maia*'s Offspring reach'd the *Theban* King.
Stretch'd on embroider'd Tapeſtry he lay,
And ſought in Sleep to doze his Cares away.
Ill-fated Race, whom Fate forbids to know
Their deſtin'd Woes, till ſhe diſcharge the Blow.
Then th' aged King with fix'd and ſteady Mind
Prepares to execute what *Jove* injoin'd,
And leſt he ſhould an airy Phantom ſeem,
Or griſly Child of ſome terrific Dream,
Aſſumes the Form of the *Bœotian* Sage,
Alike in Voice, in Feature, and in Age.
A Length of hoary Beard he ſtill retains,
And the ſame Paleneſs o'er his Viſage reigns.
But a falſe Mitre bound his awful Brow,
And in his Hand he bore an Olive-Bough,
On which were Fillets wound.—The Prince's Breaſt
With this he gently ſmote, and thus addreſt,
Thus ſleep you, careleſs of the glorious Strife.
As tho' ſecure of Empire and of Life;

v. 100. *What* Jove *enjoin'd*] *Jupiter*'s Artifice to puniſh the *Thebans* will not appear unjuſt, if we conſider, that the inceſtuous Race of *Oedipus* were themſelves impious, and were therefore juſtly doomed to Deſtruction: and *Quos Jupiter vult perdere, dementat prius.*

v. 103. *Aſſumes the Form of the* Bœotian *Sage*] Mr. *Warton* has been perhaps a little too ſevere in his Strictures on this Paſſage, in his Note on Verſe 525 of the ſeventh Book of *Virgil*'s Æneid. *Statius* (ſays he) but with little Succeſs, upon the whole, has imitated this Paſſage, where the Shade of *Laius* diſguiſed under the Figure of *Tireſias* appears to *Eteocles* aſleep.

v. 111. *Thus ſleep you*] Our Author ſeems to have copied this Speech from *Homer*'s Iliad, Book 2. Verſe 60.

Εὕδεις Ατρέος υἱὲ δαΐφρονος ἱπποδάμοιο;
Οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὕδειν βουληφόρον ἄνδρα

Ὦ λαοί

Thus unambitious of the Wreaths, which Fame
Has woven, and thy better Deeds ſhould claim?.
Leſs Guilt attends the ſkilful Pilot's Sleep,
When gath'ring Storms o'erhang the troubled Deep,
The Helm unmanag'd, and the Ship reſign'd
To ſportive Fortune, and th' inconſtant Wind.
Mean while the Heir of old *Adraſtus'* Crown
Already deems your Diadem his own,
Supports by Marriage his declining Cauſe,
And bloody *Tydeus* to his Standard draws.
Hence ſprings his Pride, his Hopes of Vengeance flow,
And a long Exile to his Brother-Foe.
By *Jove* commiſſion'd, from the Skies above
I bear this Proof of his paternal Love.
Then keep the Crown, and know, ſhould'ſt thou reſign,
His Soul is daring at the leaſt as thine:
Leſt thro' Delays you mourn your Empire loſt,
And the fierce Argives ravaging your Coaſt.
The Phantom paus'd, (for now a burſting Ray
Of Light proclaim'd the glad Approach of Day)
Then pluck'd the borrow'd Honours from his Brow,
And from his Hand diſmiſs'd the peaceful Bough.
At length he bares his Blood-impurpled Breaſt,
And all the murder'd Grandſire ſtands confeſt.

Ὦ λαοί τ' ἐπίλιτραφάλαι, κ) τόσσα μέμηλε.
Νῦν δ' ἐμέθεν ξυιες ὦκα. Διὸς δέ τοι ἄγγελός εἰμι
Ὅς σεν ἀνευθὲν ἐών, μέγα κήδεται.

v. 131. *The Phantom paus'd*] *Anchiſes*, when he is introduced appearing to his Son *Æneas*, concludes his Speech to him in the following Lines.

Jamque vale: torquet medios nox humida curſus,
Et me ſævus equis oriens afflavit anhelis.
Virgil's Æneid, Book 5. Verſe 738.

Eteocles

Eteocles now feels the ſtreaming Wound,
And full of Horror, rouls his Eyes around;
Eſſays to ſhun the Spectre's hated Sight,
And dares his abſent Brother to the Fight.
Thus when a ſleeping Tiger from afar
Hears the ſhrill Preludes of approaching War,
He ſtarts, calls forth his Spots, expands his Jaws,
Wakes to the promis'd Fight, and points his Claws;
Then bounding thro' the Thickets of the Wood,
Bears to his bloody Whelps the reeking Food.
Aurora now from *Tithon*'s Saffron Bed
With dawning Streaks of Light the Skies o'erſpread;
She ſhook the ſparkling Dew-drops from her Hair,
And bluſh'd to find the peeping Sun ſo near:
While breaking thro' the Clouds, the Morning Star,
Advancing, tow'rds her guides his roſy Car,
Nor e'er withdraws, till *Sol*'s ſuperior Ray
Flames in the Front of Heav'n, and gives the Day.

v. 141. *Thus when a ſleeping Tiger*] The Grandeur and Propriety of this Simile are too obvious to be inſiſted upon; and were I to enlarge on it, and point out the Sublimity of the Expreſſions, the Harmony of Numbers, the beautiful Connection of Circumſtances, and exact Propriety of the whole, I ſhould anticipate the Reader's Judgment. The greateſt Proof of what I advance is Mr. *Cowley*'s Imitation. He ſaw its Beauties, and endeavoured to copy them. How well he has executed it, is left to the judicious Reader to determine.

So when a *Scythian* Tiger gazing round,
A Herd of Kine in ſome fair Plain has found,
Lowing ſecure; he ſwells with angry Pride,
And calls forth all his Spots on ev'ry Side.
Then ſtops, and hurls his haughty Eyes on all
In Choice of ſome ſtrong Neck, on which to fall;
Almoſt he ſcorns ſo weak, ſo cheap a Prey,
And grieves to ſee them trembling haſte away. *David.*

Now ſpringing from his Bed, *Adraſtus* roſe,
Nor long behind the Sweets of wiſh'd Repoſe
Detain'd his Gueſts.——For Sleep had now bedew'd
Their weary Limbs, and all their Strength renew'd.
But anxious Cares *Adraſtus* had oppreſt;
Sleep fled his Eyes, and Peace forſook his Breaſt.
Muſing he calls to Mind the Fate's Decree,
And his new Gueſts connected Deſtiny.
In a ſequeſter'd Room conven'd they ſate
For Bus'neſs calculated and Debate.
Each would begin, but Fears and Doubts reſtrain:
At length the Monarch roſe, and eas'd their Pain.
Illuſtrious Youths, of Heav'n the conſtant Care,
Whom Storms of Thunder and inclement Air
Have drove beneath my Roof, by Fate's Decree
To fix the Baſe of mutual Amity.
Why ſhould I dwell on what's already known
By vulgar Fame thro' every *Grecian* Town?
How many Youths have ſtrove (tho' ſtrove in vain)
By high Deſert my Daughters' Love to gain.
But (if a Parent little Credit claim)
Yourſelves, the Objects of their decent Shame,
Saw o'er their Cheeks the glowing Bluſh ariſe,
When firſt your manly Features met their Eyes.
Did Wealth or Sway alone employ their Care,
They need not of acquiring them deſpair:
Since many a potent King of high Renown
Has wiſh'd them Partners of th' imperial Throne.
In this they might with *Dejanira* vie,
Or fam'd *Oenomaus'* boaſted Progeny.

But Fate forbids they ſhould the Bed adorn
Of one in *Elis*, or in *Sparta* born,
To you, brave Youths, decrees the beauteous Pair,
And of their dotal Wealth an equal Share.
The God's Deſcription tallies with your own,
And *Phœbus'* Choice agrees in you alone.
Their Virgin-Smiles, I ween, ſhall well repay
The ſtormy Night, and Labours of the Fray.
The Princes on each other caſt an Eye,
Expecting each his Comrade would reply,
Till bolder *Tydeus* to the Monarch bow'd
And thus diſcharg'd the Debt his Duty ow'd.
Much you enjoy of Fortune and of Fame,
Much more your gallant Deeds and Merit claim.
Of equalling your Worth the beſt deſpair,
Which adds a Jewel to the Crown you wear.
Fierce *Argos*, taught by Clemency t'obey,
Reſigns to you the Reins, and owns your Sway,
And would propitious *Jove* conſign you more,
And ſtretch your Pow'r to *Doria*'s double Shore,
Phœbus no more ſhould fly *Mycenæ*'s Plain,
Nor of their King *Elean* Vales complain:

v. 185. *But Fate forbids they ſhould*] *Adraſtus* ſeems to have lain under the ſame Reſtraints as *Latinus*.

Me natam nulli veterum ſociare procorum
Fas erat, idque omnes divique, hominesque canebant.

And again,

Eſt mihi nata, viro gentis quam jungere noſtræ,
Non patrio ex adyto ſortes, non plurima cœlo
Monſtra ſinunt.

v. 197. *Much you enjoy*] I queſtion, whether upon due Conſideration, there will not be found too much of the Orator in *Tydeus*, who, according to our Author's own Words, was *Rudis fandi*.

v. 205. Phœbus *no more ſhould fly*] As at the Feaſt of *Thyeſtes*. See *Ovid*'s *Metamorphoſis*.

Nor do the Furies only vex our State,
As thou, young Warrior, better can'ſt relate;
But I, a voluntary Exile, roam,
Nor forc'd by Rage fraternal, fly from Home.
He ſpoke, and thus ſubjoin'd the *Theban* Chief:
Tho' damp'd with Sorrows, and o'ercome with Grief,
My Soul averſe to *Venus'* myſtic Rites,
On other Objects waſtes the ſleepleſs Nights;
Yet this Alliance ſhould I now refuſe,
Fancy would flag, nor furniſh an Excuſe.
Such balmy Hope allays my troubled Breaſt,
And lulls the Paſſions of my Soul to reſt,
As ſwells the little Bark on Ocean toſt,
When near at Hand ſhe ſpies ſome friendly Coaſt.
From hence alike the Turns of Chance we'll ſhare,
And make each other's Bliſs our only Care.
No Fate my vow'd Affection ſhall divide,
By Marriage as by Gratitude ally'd.
The Princes roſe, while old *Adraſtus* ſtrove
By Strength of Language to declare his Love,
And vows, ſhould Fate his juſt Emprizes crown,
His Arms ſhould ſoon replace them on the Throne.
Mean while the Natives, ere a vague Report
Had ſcarce been wafted from the regal Court,
With loud Acclaim receive the King's Decree,
And give full Reins to Mirth and Revelry,
From hence Fame flies with unreſiſted Force,
Nor Hills, or Vales retard her airy Courſe:
And now, a tedious Length of Country paſt,
On *Cadmus'* Walls ſhe fix'd herſelf at laſt.
She ſcares the wretched King, and brings to Light
The myſtic Viſions of the former Night;

O'erwhelms his Hopes, augments his growing Fears,
And whiſpers Wars and Slaughter in his Ears.
Soon as the wiſh'd-for Dawn appears, to Court
The Sons of *Argos* in huge Swarms reſort,
Where form'd in Braſs their great Foreſathers ſtand,
And Art (ſo ſkilful was th' Engraver's Hand)
With Nature vies.—Here firſt you might diſcern
Old *Inachus*, reclining on his Urn.
Near him *Iaſius* bends with feeble Age,
And old *Acriſius* vents on *Jove* his Rage,
Phoroneus, peaceful Chief, was next ſurvey'd,
And ſtern *Chorœbus*, bearing on his Blade
A bloody Head.—In Arms great *Abas* ſhines,
And *Danaus* his future Guilt deſigns.
The Leaders firſt the ſlow Proceſſion wait,
While the loud Rabble thunder at the Gate;
The Nobles next advance, a num'rous Line,
And in the Front, by Rank diſtinguiſh'd, ſhine.
The inner Court with Fire odorous glows,
While on all Sides the female Tumult grows.
A Throng of Matrons round each Bride appear,
Inſpire with Hope, and ſoothe each Virgin-Fear.
And now with glowing Cheeks and downcaſt Eyes
The Princeſſes attend the Sacrifice,
Known by their Dignity of Dreſs and Face:
The flaſhing Purple heightens ev'ry Grace.
With Pain their anxious Feelings they ſuppreſs'd,
Some ſmall Regret ſtill linger'd in their Breaſt,
And Strugglings to retain their Virgin-State:
While the chaſte Doubts of Innocence create
New Bluſhes, that improve their nat'ral Hue,
And artleſs Tears their lovely Cheeks bedew.

Decent Confuſion!—At the moving Sight
Their tender Parents melt in ſoft Delight.
Thus ſhould *Diana*, and th' *Athenian* Maid
Deſcend from Heav'n in all their Pomp array'd;
Each in her Hands her wonted Weapons bears,
And the ſame Sternneſs in their Looks appears.
Should *Cynthia* for a Caſque her Quiver change,
And *Pallas* thro' the Lawns and Foreſts range;
The Change in either would ſo well agree,
That ſafely none the Pref'rence could decree,
The Quiver would *Minerva*'s Shoulders grace;
And the plum'd Helmet ſuit fair *Delia*'s Face.
Mean while the joyful *Argives* ſeem to vie
In public Proofs of Zeal and Loyalty.
Theſe waft to *Jove* in od'rous Flames a Pray'r,
And call for Bleſſings on the royal Pair;
With ſlaughter'd Victims' Entrails thoſe appeaſe
The Gods; nor will *Sabæan* Smoke diſpleaſe,
If a pure Heart direct the pious Vows,
And the ſtrong Gate is deckt with flow'ring Boughs.
But lo! ſad Omens from the Gods deſcend,
And *Jove*'s and Heav'n's impending Rage portend;
A ſadd'ning Horror ev'ry Face o'erſpreads,
And on their Joys a ſolemn Dulneſs ſheds.
'Twas when great *Hymen*'s ſacred Rites to crown,
They bent their Courſe to fam'd *Lariſſa*'s Town,

v. 288. *Nor will* Sabæan] Our Author is of *Perſius*'s Opinion, whoſe noble Lines on this Subject breathe more the Spirit of Chriſtianity than Heatheniſm.

> Compoſitum jus, faſque animi, ſanctoſque receſſus
> Mentis, et incoctum generoſo pectus honeſto
> Hoc cedo, ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo. *Sat. 2.*

Than

Than which *Munichia*'s Hill, nor *Athens*' Grove
Can boaſt ſuperior Proofs of *Pallas*' Love.
Here (ſo long Cuſtom had ordain'd) are led
The Nymphs, when ripen'd for the Marriage-bed,
And for the Frailty of the Sex atone
With Maiden Ringlets on the Altars thrown.
Ere they had ſcal'd the Turret's gradual Height,
The Beam diſmiſs'd the Buckler's ſacred Weight.
With horrid Clangor ſhook the plaintive Ground,
The Tapers cruſh'd, and Darkneſs ſhed around.
Then, ere they durſt proceed, as from the Shrine
A Trumpet loud proclaim'd the Wrath divine.
Firſt on the King they wildly turn their Eyes;
Then, queſtion'd, each the well-heard Sound denies.
Yet all, all feel the dreadful Sign of Woe,
And their firſt Fears by various Converſe grow.
Nor wond'rous was it, for *Argia* bore
The Bracelet, which *Harmonia* whilom wore.
O Goddeſs! ſay from what myſterious Source
The fatal Gift deriv'd ſuch noxious Force?
Fame tells, that *Vulcan* wrought it, when he ſtrove
To check the *Thracian* God's adult'rous Love,
(For uſeleſs lay the now-neglected Chain;
Threats fail'd, and Puniſhments were ſchem'd in vain)

v. 314. *The Bracelet*] *Harmonia* was the Daughter of *Mars* and *Venus*. She married *Cadmus*, and was metamorphoſed together with him into a Serpent.

v. 319. *For uſeleſs lay the*] The Poet alludes to the famous Chain, which *Vulcan* made to entrap his adulterous Conſort in: for a farther Account of which ſee *Homer*'s *Odyſſey*, and *Ovid*'s *Metamorphoſis*. Lib. 4. Fab. 5.

This Digreſſion ſeems very material and neceſſary, ſince it is founded on the Story, where the infectious Bracelet is repreſented as of great Importance, and it is alſo connected with the foregoing

With many a Gem t'was fraught and precious Stone,
To deck the Partner of the *Theban* Throne.
Long did the *Cyclops* o'er their Anvils ſweat,
And their ſwoln Sinews ecchoing Blows repeat,
Ere th' Artiſt had attain'd his vaſt Deſign,
And ſtamp'd Perfection on the Work divine.
Of poliſh'd Em'ralds was the curious Ground,
And fatal Forms of Adamant ſurround:
Sparks of etherial Temper flame above,
Fil'd Remnants of the ſwift-wing'd Bolts of *Jove*.
A Dragon's ſcaly Pride is here impreſs'd,
And there *Meduſa* rears her ſnaky Creſt.
From golden Boughs *Heſperian* Apples ſprung,
And gay to view the *Colchian* Tree was hung.
Torn from the Furies' Hair a Serpent ſhines:
To this, foul Luſt and various Plagues he joins,
Then dips the whole in Foam of Lunar Rays,
And hides the Venom in a ſprightly Blaze.
Where'er this came, th' affrighted Graces fled;
Love pin'd, and Beauty droop'd her ſick'ning Head:
Sorrow ſtill haunts the Manſion where it lies,
And Hate-engender'd Rage and Fears ariſe.
Harmonia firſt its direful Influence prov'd,
As o'er the furrow'd Plains on Spires ſhe rov'd,

and following Parts of it as in the Caſe of *Jocaſta*, mentioned by *Statius*, and of *Eriphyle* and *Amphiaraus*, whoſe Fate in the following War was owing to it.

v. 327, *Of poliſh'd Em'ralds*] The Antients were ſuperſtitiouſly exact in deſcribing any particular Suit of Armour, Ornaments, *&c.* as the Shields of *Achilles* and *Æneas*, the *Ægis* of *Pallas*; and here the Compoſition of the Materials and Sculpture are highly conſiſtent with the fatal Virtue of this Ornament.

And

And fill'd with Hiſſings dire th' *Illyrian* Coaſt,
Till all the Woman in the Snake was loſt;
Then *Semele*, for whoſe ſuperior Charms
The Thund'rer left his jealous Conſort's Arms.
Jocaſta too, by Fate's reſiſtleſs Will
(As Fame reports) poſſeſs'd this Source of Ill,
And deck'd with it, in cultur'd Beauty ſhone,
Unconſcious of her Crime, her Guilt unknown.
Diſtinguiſh'd thus, *Argia* paſs'd along,
And mov'd ſupreme amid the Female Throng.
Fair *Eriphyle* the rich Gift beheld,
And her ſick Breaſt with ſecret Envy ſwell'd.
Not the late Omens and the well-known Tale
To cure her vain Ambition ought avail.
Oh! had the Wretch by Self-Experience known
The future Woes, and Sorrows not her own!
But Fate decrees, her wretched Spouſe muſt bleed,
And the Son's Phrenzy clear the Mother's Deed.
But when the thirteenth riſing Sun had view'd
Their Banquets ended, and their Toils renew'd,

v. 355. *Fair* Eriphyle] *Statius* ſeems in the character of *Eriphyle* to have given a Leſſon of Advice to the fair Sex on their Paſſion for Dreſs and Finery. His great Maſter *Virgil* has afforded him a Precedent in the Epiſode of *Camilla*, whom he introduces purſuing *Chloreus* for the ſake of his rich Armour and Horſe-Trappings.

—— Unum ex omni certamine pugnæ
Cæca ſequebatur, totumque incauta per agmen
Fæmineo prædæ et ſpoliorum ardebat amore.

Æneid, Lib. 11. 780.

v. 361. *Her wretched Spouſe muſt bleed*] Her Huſband was *Amphiaraus*, a celebrated Augur, whom ſhe betrayed to *Polynices* for the ſake of this Bracelet, when he was endeavouring to avoid accompanying him in the Wars, in which he knew, he ſhould certainly periſh. As for her Son, the Diſtreſſes of his Family wrought ſo great an Impreſſion upon his Spirits, that he was at length ſeized with an incurable Phrenzy.

Revolving Thoughts the baniſh'd Prince remind
Of his loſt *Thebes*, and Empire left behind.
That Day returns, when Fortune's partial Hand
To his proud Brother gave the whole Command,
How the revolting Gods againſt him join'd,
When to a private State reduc'd, he pin'd,
And ſaw his Friends miſdeem'd in Crouds reſort,
To baſk beneath the Sunſhine of the Court.
One faithful Siſter would have ſhar'd his Fate,
But mourns, abandon'd at the Palace-Gate.
Her plaintive Cries, unmov'd, the Warrior hears,
For Rage refus'd a Paſſage to his Tears.
Mean while, amid the Silence of the Night,
Reflecting Mem'ry brings back to his Sight
Thoſe friendly few, that ere from *Thebes* he ſtray'd,
Condol'd, and thoſe, who Signs of Joy diſplay'd.
Anger and frantic Grief by Turns controul
His lab'ring Breaſt, and ſhake his inmoſt Soul.
While Luſt of Pow'r, untaught to brook Delay,
Flames in his Breaſt, and chides the ling'ring Day.
At length the Chief prepares to ſteer his Courſe
To tow'ring *Thebes*, and *Dirce*'s ſacred Source.
Thus fares a lordly Bull, when forc'd to yield
His lovely Miſtreſs, and forſake the Field:
But when his wonted Vigour he regains,
And a freſh Tide of Blood recruits his Veins,
He roars, impatient for the promis'd War,
Snuffs the freſh Gale, and ſpurns the Sand afar.

v. 387. *Thus fares a lordly Bull*] This Simile is an Abridgment of that beautiful Deſcription in the third Book of *Virgil*'s *Georgics*.

Amaz'd

Amaz'd, the Swains his Strength reſtor'd ſurvey,
And the late Victor trembles for his Sway.
While thus for War the Youth in ſecret pines,
Argia penetrates his cloſe Deſigns.
One Morn, ere yet *Aurora* promis'd Day,
(As in the Folds of Love entwin'd they lay)
Why ſeeks my Lord (ſhe fondly ſaid) to fly?
For nought eſcapes an ardent Lover's Eye.
Say, why that Boſom heaves with broken Sighs,
And Sleep for ever ſhuns thoſe watchful Eyes:
What hidden Cauſe extorts the ſilent Tear?
Think not a widow'd Bed alone I fear,
Or the mere Luſt of nuptial Joys ſhould ſtay
The deſtin'd Courſe, or prompt an Hour's Delay:
Tho' ſcarce twelve Suns have deck'd the Courts of *Jove*,
Since Hymen ſmil'd upon our mutual Love.
Thy Bliſs alone and Welfare I regard,
And only this thy Parting could retard.
But oh! what Raſhneſs, helpleſs and alone
T' attempt th' Enjoyment of the *Theban* Crown!
Will he, whoſe Pride and Tyranny you found,
Ere the firſt Sun had run his annual Round,
Tamely reſign the Scepter and obey,
Till the clos'd Year, reſtore th' alternate Sway?
The Gods ſome ſudden Ruin ſure prepare,
My boding Soul preſaging Fibres ſcare.
Amid the duſky Silence of the Night
Imperial *Juno* ſtood confeſs'd to Sight.
Say, what at *Thebes* can your Attention claim,
But the fair Object of a former Flame.
The ſmiling Hero claſp'd her to his Breaſt,
And with the Stamp of Love her Cheeks impreſs'd;

Prevents with Blandiſhments the riſing Tears;
And kindly thus diſpels her jealous Fears.
Think not the Wheel of Chance will e'er remain
In this rough Track. The Clouds may break again,
And a far brighter Sun than yet hath ſhone,
Survey thee Partner of a double Throne.
Reſign thy Cares to Heav'n, diſmiſs thy Fears;
At leaſt they ſuit not with thy tender Years.
From *Jove*'s ſtrict Juſtice and all-ſeeing Eyes
The perjur'd Villain ne'er unnotic'd flies.
From hence t' *Adraſtus*, on whoſe hoary Head
A Length of Years had their Experience ſhed,
Speeds the young *Theban*; nor was *Tydeus* ſlow
T' aſſiſt, but ſhar'd an equal Weight of Woe:
For the ſame Flame, which gen'rous Souls disjoins,
With equal Luſtre, when united ſhines.
Long they debate: at length by joint Conſent
Decree to ſound the Brother King's Intent
By Embaſſy, ere yet from hoſtile Force
They ſeek Redreſs, the laſt and worſt Reſource.
Fraught with th' advent'rous Taſk bold *Tydeus* glows,
Tho' long oppos'd by his diſſuading Spouſe:
At length the Compact, which in ev'ry State
Secures th' Ambaſſador a ſafe Retreat,

v. 437. *Nor was* Tydeus *ſlow*] Amidſt the Tincture of Barbariſm and Ferocity of *Tydeus* there is ſomething very amiable in his Character: not that I pretend to exculpate him for carrying his Revenge to that ſavage, unprecedented Height, though it was the Reſult of Friendſhip, and founded on an honourable Baſis. He quarrels and fights with *Polynices*; but upon the Knowledge of his Misfortunes ſtrikes an Alliance with him, and even ſacrifices his Life in his Service.

His

His Sire's Commands and Siſter's Tears prevail,
O'ercome her Pray'rs, and ſink the doubtful Scale.
Now on the woody Coaſt the Warrior ſtrays,
And ſoon the fam'd *Lernæan* Lake ſurveys,
Where the fell *Hydra* was by Flames ſubdu'd,
(For Blows in vain the toiling Chief renew'd)
And *Nemea*, where e'en now the timid Swains
Rarely, as erſt, chant forth their artleſs Strains.
From thence in View of *Corinth*'s Tow'rs he came,
And left the Port, which bears *Palæmon*'s Name;
Where in the midſt the parting *Iſthmus* lies,
And ſwelling Seas on either Side ariſe.
Then *Niſus*' flow'ring Sides the Hero gains,
And on the left views *Ceres*' favour'd Plains.
At laſt the glitt'ring Proſpect greets his Eyes
Of *Theban* Tow'rs, that ſhade the middle Skies.
Sublime in regal Pomp th' Uſurper ſate:
A Grove of Spears defends th' impervious Gate.
Here by his Subjects fear'd, not lov'd, he reigns,
And ill-got Pow'r by Tyranny maintains.
He blames his Brother's Flight and long Delay,
And wonders, he ſo late demands the Sway:
Nor wants the Tyrant e'er a ſpecious Plea
To veil his Guilt, and maſk his Villainy.
Amid the thronging Guards young *Tydeus* ſtands,
(A peaceful Olive decks his waving Hands)

v. 462. Ceres' *favour'd Plains*] Theſe are the Plains known to the Antients by the Name of *Eleuſinian*, from *Eleuſis*, a neighbouring City. They were remarkably fertile, in Return for which Bleſſing the Inhabitants built a Temple to *Ceres*, their ſuppoſed Benefactreſs.

And

And thus began (his Name and Meſſage known)
Rough as he was in Speech, and ever prone
To Wrath, nor cautious to offend the Ear,
Diminiſh'd aught the Truth, howe'er ſevere.
Say, Tyrant, (had it been your firm Deſign
At the due Time your Empire to reſign)
Why Heralds did not from your Court appear
T' inform your Brother of his ruling Year?
T'was then your Duty calmly to ſit down,
Till the next Year replac'd you on the Throne.
But he, convinc'd how well you love to reign,
Deigns thus to aſk, what baſely you detain.
Phœbus hath now his annual Progreſs made,
And cloath'd the Mountains with returning Shade,
Since *Polynices* abject and alone
Hath ſtray'd in Exile drear thro' Realms unknown.
'Tis your's in Turn th' alternate Lot to ſhare,
And bear the Wintry Wind and open Air.
Reſign it then, while guiltleſs ſhines the Crown,
Nor lay too late the bright Temptation down.
Your Pow'r in *Thebes* you've long enough diſplay'd,
In Robes of *Tyrian* Die, and Gold array'd.
Now teach your Subjects; thoſe who merit Sway,
Should firſt convince the World, they can obey.
He paus'd; and now the Tyrant's Looks reveal'd
The boiling Wrath he had in vain conceal'd.
Thus with erected Pride, the creſted Snake
By Stones provok'd, ſhoots thro' the thorny Brake.

v. 501. *Thus with erected Pride*] The Courage and Intrepidity of *Tydeus* are admirably well illuſtrated in this Simile, which is taken from *Homer*.

Ὡς δὲ δράκων ἐπὶ χειῆ ὀρέσφι ἄνδρα μίνηοι

Βεβρωκὼς,

His Scales reflect the Sun's attracted Ray:
With rolling Spires he marks the furrow'd Way,
And thro' his agitated Body draws
The liquid Venom to his thirſty Jaws.
Had not my Brother's Love of Strife been known,
(He cries) it would appear from thee alone.
In whom is ſtamp'd the Image of his Mind,
Alike of Manners rude, and ſavage Kind.
Tho' now thou talk'ſt, as if th' aſſailing Foe
Had min'd our Walls, and laid our Bulwarks low.
Yet ſhouldſt thou thus among a *Scythian* Throng
Indulge thy Luſt of Prate, and lawleſs Tongue,
Thy trampled Limbs and Corſe would ſcarce atone
For the bare Crimes thy ſland'rous Mouth has done.
Avaunt; no more provoke my Rage and know,
Thy ſacred Office ſcarce can ſtay the Blow:
But firſt this Anſwer to th' *Argolic* Lord;
That ſince his Raſhneſs has unſheath'd the Sword,
And thus attack'd me with unkingly Pride,
Bellona ſhall alone our Rights decide,
Nor my contentious Brother rule the Land,
Which Chance and Birthright gave me to command.

Βιζρωσὼς κακὰ φάρμακ', ἴδυ δέ τε μιν κόλος αἰνὸς
Σμερδαλέοι δὲ δίδςριν ἰλισσόμινος περὶ χιτῶ.

Iliad, Lib. 22. 92.

Virgil has alſo imitated it in his *Æneid*.

Qualis ubi in lucem coluber mala gramina paſtus,
Frigida ſub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat,
Nunc poſitis novus exuviis, nitiduſque juventâ,
Lubrica convolvit ſublato pectore terga
Arduus ad ſolem, et linguis micat ore triſulcis.

Agamemnon mentions this Behaviour of *Tydeus* as worthy to be imitated by his Son *Diomede*. See *Iliad*, B. 4. 370.

Mean

Mean while, unenvied, you may wear the Crown,
Which lawful Hymen has decreed your own;
The Sons of *Argos* may thy Laws obey,
And noted *Lerna* own thy happy Sway.
Contented, we'll enjoy our *Dirce*'s Plain,
And fill the Throne where *Cadmus* held his Reign:
Nor bluſh the wretched *Oedipus* to trace
From *Labdacus* the Founder of our Race.
Tho' you can boaſt an Origin divine,
And draw from *Jove* himſelf the glorious Line.
Say, can the fair *Argia*, wont to live
In all the Pomp a regal Birth can give,
Forget the Grandeur of her former State,
Nor caſt a Wiſh beyond our Palace-Gate;
Whoſe Ornaments, the Produce of our Land,
We owe to our laborious Siſter's Hand.
She'll loath perchance our Mother's coarſe Attire,
And ſordid Rags, which Woes like hers require.
Yet more—my Father from his gloomy Cell
Will grate her tender Years with many a Yell.
The Vulgar's ſtubborn Spirit now is broke,
Their Neck inur'd to bear the royal Yoke;
To this we'll add, the *Thebans* will not bear
The doubtful Rule of each alternate Heir.
Can I then baſely ſacrifice the State
To my returning Brother's treaſur'd Hate?

v. 525. *Mean while unenvied*] There is a vaſt deal of hidden Sarcaſm and Gall in this reply. The Arguments are ſtrong and well-placed, the Language elegant and eaſy, and the whole full of Spirit and Fire.

v. 531. *Nor bluſh the wretched* Oedipus] This is the very Height of Diſſimulation: we are told by the Poet, that he had deſpiſed, inſulted and drove his Father from his Palace; and that all the ſucceeding Calamities were derived from his cruel Uſage of him.

Or

Or ſhould a Reſignation be my Choice,
Say, can I influence the Senate's Voice;
Will they, to whom my gentle Sway is known,
Permit me thus to give away the Crown:
More had he ſaid, but impotent to bear,
Thus *Tydeus* ſtopt him in his full Career.
Tho' Art and Nature ſhould conſpire to form
Huge Battlements againſt *Bellona*'s Storm,
And Rocks, as erſt at your *Amphion*'s Call,
Spring from their Baſe, and form a triple Wall:
Yet ſhould thoſe Bulwarks, and thoſe Walls beat down,
Compel thee to reſign the guilty Crown;
Or ſhould thy Pride and Raſhneſs ſtill remain
Amidſt thy ruin'd town, and Heaps of ſlain,
Torn from the Head of its expiring Lord
The ſhining Spoil ſhould deck my conq'ring Sword.
Howe'er enrag'd, I yet muſt pity thoſe,
Whom thy Ambition makes my guiltleſs Foes,
Torn from their Country, Wives and Sons away
To ſure Deſtruction in th' unequal Fray.
What breathleſs Heaps ſhall raiſe *Cithæron*'s Height!
How ſhall *Iſmenos* groan beneath the Weight!

v. 557. *Tho' Art and Nature.*] *Horace* has a Paſſage equally grand and elevated.

Ter ſi reſurgat murus aheneus
Auctore *Phœbo*; ter pereat meis
Exciſus *Argivis*, ter uxor
Capta virum puerosque ploret. Lib. 3. Ode 5.

v. 571. *What breathleſs Heaps.*]

Eheu quantus equis, quantus adeſt viris
Sudor, quanta moves funera Dardanæ
Genti! jam galeam Pallas et Ægida,
Currusque et rabiem parat. B. 1. Ode 15.

Tho' void of Faith, and of fraternal Love,
Yet dare you thus confront the Gods above?
Will they in calm Neutrality look down
On broken Oaths, and Honour's Fence o'erthrown?
What Wonder then? can we expect to trace
Fair Virtue's Footsteps in so foul a Race?
Can Length of Years absolve th' incestuous Brood,
Or free the long Confusions of their Blood?
But hold—the Fates revoke their first Decree,
And *Oedipus* revives alone in thee.
This Prize of Villainy you bear away;
Our Year we claim.—But why do I delay?
The Warrior spoke, and with resistless Force
Urg'd thro' the Band of Guards his furious Course.
Thus rag'd the Boar, by vengeful *Cynthia* sent,
To mark with Ruin *Caledon*'s Extent;

His

v. 581. *The Fates revoke their first Decree.*] This is a stroke of the strongest Satire that could possibly have been given. The thought is not one of that tinsel and flashy Kind, which occurs so often in the French and Italian Poets; but manly, spirited, and truly laconic.

v. 587. *Thus rag'd the Boar.*] The Passage subjoined from *Ovid*, will exhibit to the Reader's View, whence our Author culled the chief Circumstances which adorn this beautiful Simile.

——Oeneos ultorem spreta per agros
Misit aprum.——
Riget horrida cervix:
Et setæ densis similes hastilibus horrent:
Stantque velut vallum, velut alta hastilia setæ.
——Dentes æquantur dentibus Indis.
Fulmen ab ore venit.——
Licet eminus esse
Fortibus.——
Dixit, et aerata torsit grave cuspide cornum.
At manus Oenidæ variat: missisque duabus,
Hasta prior terrâ, medio stetit altera tergo,

Nec

His briſtled Back appear'd a thick-ſet Grove,
And *Jove*'s own Thunder from his Mouth he drove.
In vain the ſhouting Sons of *Greece* ſurround,
And from hurl'd Stones inflict a diſtant Wound.
In Triumph he ſurveys the proſtrate Foe,
Till at *Oenides* levelling a Blow,
The ſideling Chief prevents the glancing Wound,
And with his Javelin nails him to the Ground.
Thus anger'd, *Tydeus* left the guilty Town,
And ſeem'd to make his Brother's Cauſe his own.
On Earth the fruitleſs Branch in Haſte he threw,
And o'er the Plains with winged Ardour flew;
The Matrons eye from their Balconies' Height
The Chief, and vent in Curſes their Deſpight,
But not on him alone.—The Tyrant bears
His Share of Hate convey'd in ſecret Pray'rs.
Nor does the Monarch's Turn for Treach'ry fail,
By Nature taught too often to prevail:
With Bribes and Threats he gains a choſen Throng
T'aſſault young *Tydeus* as he paſs'd along:
Whoſe daring Spirit and intrepid Mien
Made them fit Actors of ſo vile a Scene.
Oh! fatal Madneſs of th' ambitious Soul!
What Lengths can bind it, or what Heights controul?

Nec mora: dum ſævit, dum corpora verſat in orbem,
Stridentemque novo ſpumam cum ſanguine fundit,
Vulneris auctor adeſt, hoſtemque irritat ad iram,
Splendidaque adverſos venabula condit in armos.
Metamorph. Book 8. Fable 4.

v. 603. *The Tyrant bears.*] Not all the Grandeur and Privileges of a crowned Head, can ſecure it from the ill Wiſhes of an injured People. The fear of Puniſhment may reſtrain the Tongue, but cannot influence the Sentiments of the Heart.

Which dares attack, what each preceding Age
Had juſtly deem'd exempt from hoſtile Rage.
No Arts he'd leave untry'd, no Means forego,
Would Fortune yield him up his Brother-Foe.
Mean while th' unfolding Gates diſcloſe a Train
Of Chiefs ne'er deſtin'd to return again:
In one firm Orb was rang'd the glitt'ring Band,
Oppos'd, ye Gods! to *Tydeus'* ſingle Hand,
As if prepar'd to ſtorm ſome hoſtile Town,
Or beat the Walls with batt'ring Engines down.
For Fear had thus the ſcatter'd Troop combin'd,
The ſure Attendant of a guilty Mind.
Thro' thorny Woods, a near and ſecret Way,
They march'd, unnotic'd, wedg'd in firm Array.
Far from the Town two ſhaded Hills ariſe,
And loſe their adverſe Summits in the Skies:
One Side is bounded by the Grove's Embrace;
A Mountain's Brow o'erhangs the middle Space.
The Nature of the Place, and gloomy Site
Seem'd form'd for Ambuſcade, and Deeds of Night.
A Path obſcure here winds the Rocks between,
Beneath are ſpacious Fields, a flow'ring Scene.
Here, poſted on a Cliff's declining Brow,
From whence ſhe might ſurvey the Vale below,

The

v. 625. *Through thorny Woods*, &c.] This Place of Ambuſh is not unlike that deſcribed by Virgil in the Eleventh Book of his Æneid.

Eſt curvo anfractu vallis, accommoda fraudi
Armorumque dolis: quam denſis frondibus atrum
Urget utrumque latus: tenuis quo ſemita ducit,
Anguſtæque ferunt fauces, adituſque maligni. V. 522

v. 635. *Here poſted*] *Oedipus* in *Seneca* ſpeaks thus of the Sphynx.

Nec Sphinga cæcis verba nectentem modis
Fugi. Cruentos vatis infandæ tuli Rictus,

The Sphynx once dwelt.—Her Cheeks were pale to view,
And her fell Eyes ſuffus'd with gory Dew.
Oft with expanded Wings the Monſter preſt
The mould'ring Bones of Mortals to her Breaſt,
And hurl'd her Eyes along the winding Way,
Leſt, unobſerving, ſhe ſhould loſe her Prey,
But if his Fate, or the avenging Gods
Had drawn ſome Wretch to her obſcene Abodes,
She clapp'd her Wings diſtain'd with human Gore,
And fill'd with Yellings the retentive Shore.
Then with protended Nails his Face ſhe ſtruck,
And oft her breaking Teeth their Hold forſook.
Thus long ſhe reign'd: At laſt with headlong Flight
Sprung from the Rocks, and ſought the Realms of Night.
For *Oedipus*, by *Phœbus'* Aid, diſclos'd
The dark Ænigma which ſhe'd long propos'd.
Untouch'd the Graſs, neglected lies the Wood,
And hungry Beaſts at Diſtance ſeek their Food.
The Dryads never haunt theſe loathſome Bowr's,
Nor Swains with Incenſe bribe the rural Pow'rs.

Rictus, et albens oſſibus ſparſis ſolum.
Cumque ex ſuperbâ rupe, jam prædæ imminens,
Aptaret alas, verbera et caudam movens,
Sævi Leonis more, concuteret minas;
Carmen popoſci. Sonuit horrendum; inſuper
Crepuêre malæ: ſaxaque impatiens moræ
Revulſit unguis, viſcera expectans mea.
Nodoſa ſortis verba, et implexos dolos,
Ac triſte carmen alitis ſolvi feræ. *Oedipus*, Act I. V. 92.

v. 649. *At laſt with headlong flight.*] Milton alludes to theſe Verſes of our Author.

— The *Theban* Monſter that propos'd
Her Riddle, and him that ſolv'd it not, devour'd;
That once found out and ſolv'd, for Grief and Spight,
Caſt herſelf headlong from th' *Iſmenian* Steep.

To other Groves ill-omen'd Birds repair,
And from afar abhor the tainted Air.
Meanwhile the *Thebans*, urg'd by cruel Fate,
Th' *Ætolian* Chief in ſilent Pomp await;
Reclining on their Spears, the Wood ſurround,
And reſt their Bucklers on the dewy Ground.
The Sun recall'd his unavailing Light,
And on the ſhaded Ocean ruſh'd the Night;
When *Tydeus* from an Eminence, ſurvey'd
Their Shields and Helmets glitt'ring thro' the Shade.
Where thro' the ſcanty Branches *Phœbe* gleams
On their bright Armour with refracted Beams.
Amazement ſeiz'd him, yet he onward hied,
And graſp'd the faithful Sabre at his Side:
A pointed Javelin glitter'd in his Hand,
While he accoſts them with this ſtern Demand.
Warriors, whence come ye, and why thus prophane
With War's Alarms, the Night's alternate Reign?

Silent

v. 665. *When* Tydeus *from an Eminence.*] The two Adventurers in the ninth Æneid, are diſcovered by the ſame accident.

Cum procul hos lævo flectentes limite cernunt:
Et galea Euryalum ſubluſtri noctis in umbra
Prodidit immemorem, radiiſque adverſa refulſit. V. 372

v. 673. *Warriors whence come ye?*] As we are now arrived at this great Action of *Tydeus*, it may be worth while to tranſcribe a Paſſage from *Crucius*'s Lives of the *Roman* Poets relative to it.

" Nothing can equal the Intrepidity of *Tydeus*, when he was " attacked, by Surprize, by fifty Men that *Eteocles* (whom he had " provoked by his haughty Behaviour, during his Embaſſy to him " from *Polynices*) ſecretly diſpatched after him from *Thebes*, to put " him to Death. When he comes to diſcover their Numbers, he " turns pale with Anger at ſo baſe an Enterprize, and, by the " Slaughter he makes amongſt them, ſoon convinces them of their " Error, who eaſily expected to over-power one Man with their " Numbers. To ſecure himſelf from behind, he climbs up a high

" Mountain,

Silent they ſtood: and no Return of ſound
Convinc'd the Chief he treads on hoſtile Ground.
A Javelin ſoon ſupplies the Want of Tongue,
By *Chthonius* hurl'd, the Leader of the Throng.
The Weapon whizzes in its airy Courſe,
Nor miſs'd the Mark, though deſtitute of Force;
It pierc'd the *Ætolian* Boar's erected Hide,
(The Chief's Defence, and erſt the Monſter's Pride)
And o'er his Shoulder flew, unſtain'd with Blood,
Where the falſe Point deſerts the feeble Wood.
Then Paleneſs cloath'd his Face, but ſuch as ſhews
Exceſs of Wrath.—His ſtiff'ning Hair aroſe,
And now he hurls his angry Looks around,
And views, amaz'd, the num'rous Foe ſurround.
Whence does (he ſaid) this needleſs Terror grow,
Of meeting on the Plain a ſingle Foe?
Advance, like Sons of *Thebes*, and bravely wield
Your glittering Weapons on this open Field.

"Mountain, and from thence hurls a prodigious Fragment of a "Rock at his Purſuers, which the ſtrongeſt Yoke of Oxen could "hardly draw. This likewiſe is imitated from *Ajax* in *Homer*, "and the Poet has endeavoured to expreſs this Action in his Num-"bers. The Spondees of the firſt Line expreſs his Contention in "tearing it away from the Rock: The beginning of the third "breaks it off with a Crack, the reſt of the third and fourth "heave it up, and poiſe it in the Air.

Saxum ingens, quod vix plenâ cervice juvenci
Vertere humo, muriſque valent inferre gementes,
Rupibus avellit, dein toto ſanguine nixus
Suſtinet, immanem quærens librare ruinam, B. 2. Theb.

"To ſoften the Improbability of ſo prodigious a victory as this, "which *Tydeus* here gained over the fifty *Thebans*, who were all "ſlain but one Man, whom he forced to live, and bear the fatal "Meſſage of this Misfortune to *Thebes*, the Poet diſcovers *Minerva*, "who is ſaid to have ſecretly protected and ſtrengthened him "during the Engagement, and reproves him afterwards for vainly "aſcribing the Succeſs to his own Valour." *Life of* Statius, Vol. I.

Scarce had he ſpoke, when ruſhing from their Holds,
A num'rous Band the intrepid Chief infolds:
From Hill and Dale they pour; their Bucklers yield
A ſilver Sound, and brighten all the Field.
So when the mingled Cry of Men and Hounds,
Invades the Foreſt, or the Wood ſurrounds,
From Covert bound the Stags, a fearful Train,
And ſcour in num'rous Herds the verdant Plain.
The Hero then aſcends a Mountain's Height,
The beſt Retreat from ſuch unequal Fight.
From hence, when poſted on the impending Brow,
He might with Eaſe annoy the Foes below.
Enrag'd, he tore the Fragment of a Rock,
(Earth deeply groan'd beneath the mighty Shock)
Then ſwung it round, and poiſing it on high,
Sought where to let the pond'rous Ruin fly.
Two Steers beneath th' enormous Weight would groan,
But *Tydeus* hurl'd it from the Rock alone.

v. 700. *And ſcour in num'rous Herds.*] This Account of the Deer flying together in Herds is confirmed by *Virgil.*

——Aliâ de parte patentes
Tranſmittunt curſu campos, atque agmina cervi
Pulverulenta fugâ glomerant monteſque relinquunt.

v. 705. *He tore the Fragment.*] It may not perhaps be diſagreeable to the Reader, to ſee how the Heroes in *Homer* and *Virgil* handle this Kind of Weapon.

— Ὁ δὲ χειμάδιον λάβε χειρὶ
Τυδείδης, μέγα ἔργον, ὃ οὐ δύω γ' ἄνδρε φέροιεν
Οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσιν, ὁ δὲ μιν ῥεῖα παλλε καὶ οἶος. Lib. 5.

Turnus in the twelfth Book of the Æneid, Verſe 896.

Saxum circumſpicit ingens,
Vix illud lecti bis ſex cervice ſubirent,
Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora terra
Ille manu raptum trepidâ torquebat in hoſtem,
Altior inſurgens, et curſu concitus Heros.

Thus

Thus, with a Goblet lifted in his Hand,
Brave *Pholeus* routed the *Theſſalian* Band.
Thus ſapp'd by Time, from ſome o'erhanging Steep,
A rolling Fragment thunders on the Deep.
The *Thebans* felt it, ere they ſaw it fly,
And cruſh'd in one promiſcuous Ruin lie.
Four Chiefs, intomb'd beneath th' oppreſſive Weight,
Clos'd their dim Eyes in one united Fate;
The reſt to their ſtrong Holds again repair,
Unmindful of their Charge, and promis'd Care.
His inward Worth and Virtue fail'd to ſave
Brave *Dorylas* from the relentleſs Grave.
In vain proud *Theron* boaſts his noble Race,
And draws his Lineage from the God of *Thrace*.
Next *Halys* fell, a Chief whoſe Strength could tame
The bounding Steed, in Arms a mighty Name:
But here, alas! on Foot he ſought the War,
Nor join'd ſwift Horſes to the rapid Car.
Laſt, *Phædimus* in Death's eternal Shade
Sunk, unexperiencing great *Bacchus'* Aid.
When fiercer now, he ſaw them quit the Fray;
He ruſh'd, a Lion, on his helpleſs Prey;
With ſwift-whirl'd Javelins fed their growing Fear,
Annoy'd the Front, and gall'd them in the Rear.
With headlong Rage he iſſues on the Plain,
(Nor Cares of Life or Safety can detain.)

V. 721. *His inward Worth and Virtue fail'd.*]
Αἶψα δ' ἀρ' ἔπεφνε βίην ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης
Τυδρεΐδην, ὃς ἔναιεν ἰϋκτιμένῃ ἐν Ἀρίσβῃ,
Ἀφνείου βιότοιο, φίλος δ' ἦν ἀνθρώποισι.
Πάντας γὰρ φιλέεσκεν ὁδῷ ἔπι οἰκία ναίων.
Ἀλλὰ οἱ οὔτις τῶν γε τότ' ἤρκεσε λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον,
Πρόσθεν ὑπαντιάσας, Iliad, B. 6. V. 12.

Then

Then ſeiz'd a glitt'ring Target, which before,
While Fate permitted, valiant *Theron* bore:
The ſpacious Orb he moves on ev'ry Part,
And ſtands impervious to each hoſtile Dart.
The flaming Sabre waves their Heads above,
(The ſhining Earneſt of paternal Love)
Now theſe, now thoſe, with fatal Blows he ply'd,
And the red Slaughter ſwells on ev'ry Side.
But while the *Theban* Troops prolong the Fray,
Involv'd in Night, Diſorder and Diſmay,
With heedleſs Rage they deal their Blows around,
And on their Comrades oft inflict a Wound:
O'er breathleſs Heaps alternately they reel;
Darts hiſs on Darts, and Steel deſcends on Steel.
He preſſes on, o'ercoming thoſe who try
The Conflict, and o'ertaking thoſe who fly.
Briareus thus (if *Phlegra* Credit claim)
Oppos'd the Regents of the ſtarry Frame.
The Thund'rer launch'd his flaming Bolts in vain,
Nor *Phœbus'* Shafts, nor *Pallas'* Snakes reſtrain.

v. 753. Briareus *thus.*] *Briareus* was one of the bold Invaders of Heaven. He is reported to have had an hundred Arms and a hundred Breaſts. In the Midſt of his Attempt he was ſtruck with a Thunderbolt, and buried under Mount *Ætna*. However, at his firſt Aſſault, he ſpread ſuch a Terror amongſt the Gods, that they metamorphoſed themſelves into Beaſts and Birds, and betook themſelves to different Countries till the Storm was over.

This Simile, upon the whole, is really grand and noble; and was intended to give the Reader the moſt advantageous Ideas of our Hero's Valour and Intrepidity; and we muſt own, the Poet has gained a double End: and does not leave us in greater Admiration of *Tydeus*'s Courage, than of his own Art and Genius. The two laſt Lines are elevated to the higheſt Degree, and cannot fail of pleaſing every true Lover of the Sublime.

The

The Spear of haughty *Mars* unheeded flies,
And *Etna*'s Forge in vain new Bolts ſupplies.
Unmov'd he ſtalks along the Fields of Light,
And with Regret beholds th' exhauſted Fight.
Thus *Tydeus* in the glorious Conflict glows,
And pours, like Lightning, on his trembling Foes:
Then, as if bent on Flight, around them wheel'd,
And intercepts their Anger with his Shield.
Oft from its Orb he pluck'd a briſtling Wood,
The Darts, returning, drink their Maſter's Blood.
His wounded Breaſt ſtopp'd many a Weapon's Courſe;
But Heav'n diſarm'd them of their fatal Force.
Deiolochus beneath a whirling Blow,
Not unattended, ſought the Shades below:
For *Phlegeus*, bounding with elated Heart,
And Axe upheav'd, ruſh'd on the Victor's Dart.
Then *Lycophon*, and mighty *Gyan* bled,
By *Tydeus* number'd with the vulgar Dead.
In vain the braver few reſiſt, in vain
Recall their Comrades ſcouring o'er the Plain.
The crimſon Horrors of the Fatal Night
Allay their Thirſt of Blood, and Love of Fight.
When *Chromis*, to the *Theban* Kings ally'd,
Proud with the Capture of a Lyon's Hide,

v. 779. *When* Chromis.] There is ſomewhat in the Character of this Warrior, like that of *Numanus* in the ninth Book of the Æneid. They are both ſelf-ſufficient, confident Bravadoes; and it may be obſerved, that the Poets never fail of making them ſlain, and doing what is called poetical Juſtice.

Theſe little Anecdotes are introduced very opportunely, and ſerve to recall the Eyes of the Reader from the Scenes of Blood and Horror he is almoſt perpetually engaged in, to Objects of a more calm and tranquil Nature; beſides they refreſh his Mind by their Variety, and keep off that Inattention, which will unavoidably creep on in the Courſe of a long Narration.

With

With knotted Club in Hand, amidſt them ran,
And thus, a ſeeming *Hercules*, began.
Him *Dryope* on fair *Iſmenus'* Shore
Brought forth, when heedleſs of the Charge ſhe bore,
She mingled with the *Bacchanalian* Train,
And drag'd a Bullock to her Patron's Fane.
Her burſting Womb (an unexpected Birth)
Diſcharg'd its Burden on the clay-cold Earth:
Shall then our Spoils (he cries) in Triumph borne,
Ye Sons of *Thebes*, this haughty Chief adorn?
Shall he at *Argos* our Diſgrace proclaim,
(Tho' he muſt fail of Credit and of Fame)
Fulfil ye thus the Promiſe you have made,
And is the Royal Bounty thus repaid?
More had he ſpoke, but whiſtling from above
Thro' his cleft Jaws a pointed Javelin drove.
Then his dull Ears with hollow Murmurs rung,
Th' unfiniſh'd Accents flutter'd on his Tongue,
Thro' all his Limbs cold crept the ſhades of Death,
And in thick Gaſps he yields his vital Breath.
You too, brave *Theſpians*, if my Verſe can give
Immortal Honour, ſhall in Fame revive.
Brave *Periphas* beneath the expiring Load
Of his lov'd Brother, croſs'd the ſhining Road,
(Than which nor Length of Time or Place can prove
A brighter Inſtance of fraternal Love)
His Breaſt beneath the Cuiraſs heaves with Sighs,
Nor the cloſe Helm reſtrains his ſtreaming Eyes,
When lo! a Weapon flying from behind,
The ſubtle Texture of his Ribs disjoin'd;
Nor here delaying, ſpent its deadly Force,
But fixed him to his dying Brother's Corſe:

Who

Who felt the Stroke, though on the Verge of Death,
And ſtruggling to detain the parting Breath.
Thus *Periphas* (whoſe Faculties were found,
And Senſe uninjur'd by the recent Wound)
" O may thy Sons thus preſs to thy Embrace,
And print warm Kiſſes on thy clay-cold Face."
Thus the brave Pair perform'd their mutual Vow,
And fought, with Hand in Hand, the Shades below.
Mean while with Javelin, and protended Shield
The Warrior cours'd *Mænetes* o'er the Field.
In vain he ſtrove with ſafety to retreat,
The treach'rous Ground betray'd his haſty Feet.
In vain with Blandiſhments he tempts the Foe,
And from his Throat ſuſpends the deſtin'd Blow.
" By Heav'n's high Regents, and yon ſtarry Train,
" That deck with radiant Orbs th' Etherial Plain,
" By ſacred Night, propitious to thy Cauſe,
" Oh! ſtay thy Hand, nor ſcorn the juſt Appſauſe,
" Which from my Mouth thy val'rous Feats ſhall gain,
" Regardleſs of the Tyrant's hated Reign.
" So may proud *Thebes* her ſlaught'red Offspring mourn,
" And joyful *Argos* hail thy ſafe Return."
To whom the Hero, with a gloomy Frown:
" Vain are thy Tears, the fatal Die is thrown,
" Hence to grim *Pluto*'s Realms, nor ſeek t' enjoy
" That Life thou'ſt fought in *Tydeus* to deſtroy.
" Why lengthen thus the Thread of tedious Life,
" Doom'd to be cut in War's approaching Strife?
This ſaid, his Spear cuts ſhort the Suppliant's Pray'r,
For ever mute.—His Soul diſſolves in Air.
Then boldly preſſing on the flying Crowd,
He ſprings, and thus in Triumph vaunts aloud.

" Think

" Think not, ye Daſtards, this ſad Night renews
" Great *Bacchus'* Orgies, and triennial Dues,
" No howling Matrons rend their floating Hair,
" And clad in Deer-Skins, wreathed Javelins bear;
" Or to the Fluce's effeminating Sound,
" In antic Meaſures beat the trembling Ground.
" No Luſt-inciting Timbrel here invites
" To mix with Eunuchs in unmanly Fights.
" Far other Scenes of Battle and of Rage
" Employ our Arms, and all our Thoughts engage.
" Go, ſeek your Comrades in the *Stygian* Shade,
" And leave to Men of Worth the martial Trade."
While thus he raves, his Sinews loſe their Force,
And the chill Blood ſuſpends its purple Courſe;

v. 845. *Think not.*] *Statius* copied this ſatyrical Speech from that of *Numanus* in the ninth Æneid.

O verè Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges! ite, per alta
Dindyma, ubi aſſuetis biforem dat tibia cantum.
Tympana vos buxuſque vocant Berecynthia matris
Idææ. Sinite arma viris, et cedite ferro.

v. 857. *While thus he raves.*] *Ennius* has a ſimilar Paſſage Ann. B. 15.

Undique conveniunt, velut imber, tela tribuno:
Confligunt parmam; tinnit haſtilibus umbo
Ærato ſonitu galeæ: ſed nec pote quiſquam
Undique nitendo corpus diſcerpere ferro.
Semper abundantes haſtas frangitque quatitque:
Totum ſudor habet corpus, multumque laborat.
Nec reſpirandi fit copia præpete ferro.
Hiſtri tela manu jacientes ſollicitabant.

Taſſo likewiſe imitates it, B. 9. Stanza 97.

Fatto intanto hà il Soldan ciò, che è conceſſo
Fare a terrena forza, or piu non puote,
Tutto è ſangue, e ſudore, un grave, e ſpeſſo
Anhelar gli ange il petto, e i fianchi ſcote,
Langue ſotto lo ſcudo il braccio oppreſſo,
Gira la deſtra il ferro in pigre rote;
Spezza, e non taglia, e divenendo ottuſo,
Perduto il brando omai di brando ha l'uſo.

Each

Each Object of his Aim eludes the Stroke,
And his looſe Knees his fleeting Strength beſpoke.
The Boſs ſuſtains the well-known Shield no more,
And dewy Sweat diſtils from ev'ry Pore.
From his warm Face the bloody Torrents pour,
And his diſcolour'd Hair emits a Show'r.
Thus when the King of Brutes has ſtorm'd the Fold
By Famine preſs'd, by Shepherds uncontroul'd,
He feaſts luxurious on the tempting Food,
And ſhakes his Mane, erect with clotted Blood:
But quickly pamper'd, bids his Wrath ſubſide,
And views the Ground, with ſlipp'ry Slaughter dy'd;
Then bites the Air, and e'er he hies away,
Licks the ſpare Remnants of his mangled Prey.
The Warrior now to *Thebes* had bent his Courſe,
And ſhewn the Marks of his ſuperior Force;
When ruſhing from the Skies, th' *Athenian* Maid
His raſh Attempt, and daring Ardour ſtay'd.
O thou, by whoſe right Arm unerring Fate
Decrees Deſtruction to the *Theban* State,
With Moderation uſe whate'er is giv'n,
Nor dare beyond the Bounds preſcrib'd by Heav'n.
All you can wiſh beyond theſe glorious Spoils,
Is public Credit to reward your Toils.

Hæmon's

v. 875. *When ruſhing.*] This Paſſage is borrowed from that of *Homer*, in the tenth Iliad, where *Minerva* deſcends from Heaven, and adviſes *Diomede* to retire, when he would have puſhed his Conqueſts farther. Her Words are,

Νόστε δὴ μνῆσαι, μεγαθύμε Τυδείδη υἱὲ,
Νῆας ἐπὶ γλαφυρὰς, μὴ καὶ πεφοβημένον ἔλθῃς,
Μήπε τις καὶ Τρῶας ἐγείρησι θεὸς ἀλλος.

I believe every one will allow the Allegory here to be juſt, natural, and unforced. *Tydeus*, fluſhed with Succeſs, would have returned to

Hæmon's prophetic Offspring only lives,
Nor willing, he his ſlaughter'd Friends ſurvives.
He, who in Wiſdom and Experience old,
Could Fates foreſee, and myſtic Dreams unfold,
Had warn'd the King: but by the Gods Decree,
He heard and diſbeliev'd the Prophecy.
To him, while for delaying Death he pines,
The Victor-Chief this odious Taſk conſigns.
Whoe'er thou art, whom Mercy prompts to ſpare,
This Meſſage to the *Theban* Monarch bear;
Bid him prevent each nodding Turret's Fall,
And with deep Trenches fortify the Wall:
Arm ev'ry Son of *Cadmus* in his Cauſe,
And ſubject all to military Laws.
Ere ſoon he ſee me, like a Ray of Light,
Break through the Cloud of Hoſts oppos'd in Fight.
To *Pallas* then, Aſſiſtant in his Toils,
The Hero dedicates the bloody Spoils.

to *Thebes*, loaded with the Spoils of his ſlaughtered Enemies; but while he is meditating upon it, Wiſdom, expreſſed by *Minerva*, deſcends from Heaven, and diſſuades him from ſo raſh an Attempt. Hence we may ſee how ſtrongly the Poetry of the Ancients was connected with their Religion, and of what ſingular Importance their Mythology was to ſet off and decorate their Compoſitions. Had the Poet obſerved, that his Hero's Raſhneſs gave Place to cooler Reflections, we ſhould have paſſed it over, as indifferent, and unworthy any particular Notice, but when he ſays, that *Minerva* adviſed him againſt putting his Projects in Execution, who is not awakened, attentive, delighted?

v. 887. *But by the Gods Decree.*] The fair *Caſſandra* was ſubject to the ſame fatal Diſregard.

Tunc etiam fatis aperit Caſſandra futuris
Ora, dei juſſu non unquam credita Teucris. Æn. B. 2. V. 246.

v. 899. *To Pallas then.*] *Æneas* erects a Trophy of this Kind to *Mars*, Æneid, B. 11. Verſe 4.

Ingentem quercum, deciſis undique ramis,
Conſtituit tumulo, fulgentiaque induit arma,

Mezenti

There grew an Oak which long had brav'd the Rage
Of ruſhing Tempeſts, and corroding Age:
High on a riſing Eminence it ſtood,
The Pride and Glory of the ſubject Wood.
This with the Glare of creſted Helms he grac'd,
And Shields with Wounds and hoſtile Gore defac'd,
To theſe a Heap of ſhiver'd Spears he joins,
And Swords ne'er uſed before on ſuch Deſigns.
Then from the high rais'd Pile his Hands he rears,
While Echo from the Hills returns his Pray'rs:
O Virgin, Daughter of immortal *Jove*,
(Nor need the Sire his Offspring diſapprove)
Whoſe beamy Caſque a beauteous Horror crowns,
And on whoſe Shield expreſſive Gorgon frowns.
To thee *Bellona*, great in Arms, muſt yield,
And *Mars* reſign the Honours of the Field.
O deign then (whether from *Pandion*'s Mount
You ruſh impetuous, or th' *Aonian* Fount,
In whoſe encircling Waves you bathe your Hair,
Oft as the Sons of Earth you make your Care)
T' accept theſe Trophies of the conquer'd Foe,
Sacred by Will, by Gratitude and Vow.
Let theſe a while ſuffice: but ſhould again
Kind Fortune land me on my native Plain,

Mezenti Ducis exuvias; tibi magne trophæum
Bellipotens: aptat rorantes ſanguine criſtas,
Telaque trunca viri, et bis ſex thoraca petitum
Perfoſſumque locis; clypeumque ex ære ſiniſtro
Subligat, atque enſem collo ſuſpendit eburnum.

The Ancients laid ſo great a Streſs upon theſe hoſtile Trophies, that they deſpaired of Conqueſt without having previouſly conſecrated them to ſome Deity, who preſided over warlike Affairs.

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Then to thy Honour golden Fanes ſhall riſe,
And daily Fumes enwrap the ſcented Skies.
Fix'd on thoſe Hills from whoſe impending Steep
Your Eyes may range along th' *Ionian* Deep,
Where *Achelous* fraught with rural Spoils,
O'erflows his Banks, and mocks the Shepherd's Toils.
Here ſhall be ſeen in Braſs and ſculptur'd Stone,
A ſcepter'd Race, and Deeds of high Renown;
While the proud Creſt, bright Lance, and captive Blade,
Shall on the loaded 'Scutcheon ſhine diſplay'd
Which *Jove* and you have whilom render'd mine,
And which unwilling *Thebes* may yet reſign.
A hundred Nymphs obſequious to thy Nod,
With Torches ſhall illume the fair Abode:
And in their Wreaths with ſtudy'd Art unite
The glowing Purple and unſully'd White.
An aged Matron at thy Shrine ſhall ſtand,
And feed the Flame with unremitting Hand;
Nor raſhly dare with curious Eye prophane
Thy myſtic Rites and Orgies of the Fane.
E'en *Cynthia* ſhall without Reluctance ſee
The Firſt-Fruits of the Year decreed to thee.
Thus *Tydeus* ſpoke, impatient of Delay,
And to fam'd *Argos* took his weary Way.

v. 945. *E'en Cynthia.*] *Tydeus* alludes here to *Diana*'s Reſentment againſt *Oeneus*, his Father. See *Ovid.* Metamorph.

End of Book II.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE ARGUMENT.

ETEOCLES, *anxious for the Succeſs of the Ambuſcade, paſſes the Night without Sleep. In the Morning* Mæon, *the Prophet, returns, and, after a ſevere Invective againſt the Tyrant's Ambition, falls upon his own Sword. The King, enraged at his ſeeming Inſolence, forbids the Rites of Burial to be beſtowed on him. In the Midſt of this Confuſion,* Ide, *a* Theban *Matron makes a pathetic Lamentation over the Bodies of her two Sons.* Alethes *endeavours to mitigate the Grief of his Fellow-Citizens, and declares his Reſolution of killing himſelf. Meanwhile* Jupiter *ſummons* Mars *to take the Charge of the War upon him, and deters the Gods from making any Oppoſition in favour of either Nation.* Mars *in his Deſcent from Heaven is met by* Venus, *who uſes all her Art to diſſuade him from putting the Commands of* Jupiter *in Execution.* Adraſtus *and his Council are diſturbed by the abrupt Arrival of* Tydeus, *who adviſes them to march to* Thebes *that Inſtant. The Common People, exaſperated at the Treachery of* Eteocles, *are ſcarcely diſſuaded from putting this raſh Counſel in Execution.* Adraſtus *ſends two Augurs for Advice from* Jupiter *how to act; and is threatened with the Deſtruction of his whole Army if he makes War. Then* Capaneus, *a Warrior of diſtinguiſhed Valour, puts himſelf at the Head of the Mob, and forces* Amphiaraus *out of his Retirement, by whom he is acquainted with the Fortune of the War, but to no Purpoſe. At Midnight* Argia *importunes her Father to give his Conſent to the War, whoſe Anſwer concludes the Book.*

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS,

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE Moon had meaſur'd half the Courſe of Night,
And the Stars ſhone with undiminiſh'd Light:
But, though a tedious Interval remains,
Ere fair *Aurora* climbs th' Etherial Plains,
Involv'd in Cares, the *Theban* Monarch lies:
Peace fled his Breaſt, and Sleep forſook his Eyes.
While the Reflection of his baſe Deſigns
Preys on his Mind, and Fear the worſt divines,
Fear, that anticipates the Voice of Fame,
And loves new Objects of Deſpair to frame.

v. 5. *Involv'd in Cares*] The Pleaſures of illegal Acquiſitions are unequal to the Cares and Fears ariſing from them. The Pains of the Body are curable and tranſient; but the Stings of Conſcience limitable by Repentance and Death only. *Claudian* has deſcribed the Torments of a guilty Villain, in the Perſon of *Ruffinus*, with great Spirit and exact Propriety.

At procul exanguis Ruffinum perculit horror:
Infectæ pallore genæ, ſtetit ore gelato
Incertus peteretne fugam, veniamne ſubactus
Poſceret an ſtantes ſeſe transferret in hoſtes.
Quid nunc Divitiæ? quid fulvi vaſta metalli
Congeries? quid purpureis effulta columnis
Aſria prolatæve juvant ad ſidera moles?
Addit iter, numeratque dies, ſpatioque viarum
Metitur vitam, torquetur peſte futurâ:
Nec recipit ſomnos, et ſæpe cubilibus amens
Excutitur, pœnamque luit formidine pœnæ.

In *Ruffinum*. Lib. 2.

Aſham'd to doubt the Fortune of the Fray,
He ſeeks Excuſes for their long Delay;
And cries—Has Fortune, or ſome fav'ring God
Inſpir'd the Foe to ſhun the publick Road?
Or Fame a Rumor of our Ambuſh ſpread,
And rous'd all *Argos* to revenge the Dead?
Nor have I choſe a mean, inglorious Train,
Averſe to Fight, or Strangers to the Plain,
But Chiefs, who great in Arms ſuffice alone - - - -
To level *Argos*, and ſecure my Throne.
Fierce as great *Tydeus* ſeems and prone t' engage,
Yet may he dread my Spear's reſiſtleſs Rage;
Though Braſs and Adamant their Strength unite,
To fence his Boſom, and exclude the Fight.
Whence theſe Delays then? where the doubtful Strife
And Toil is ended with a ſingle Life.
Such various Care his tortur'd Breaſt inflames:
Th' Advent'rers much, but more himſelf he blames,
Who, preſs'd with Doubts, forbore the final Blow,
And ſafe from *Thebes* diſmiſs'd the ſcornful Foe.
In vain he ſeeks in Sleep a ſhort Reſource,
O'erwhelm'd with Shame, diſtracted with Remorſe.
As when the Pilot, tempted by the Breeze
And glaſſy Surface, ſeeks the middle Seas,
Oft o'er the Face of Æther Clouds ariſe,
And *Jove* in ſudden Show'rs forſakes the Skies:
From Eaſt to Weſt the mutt'ring Thunder rolls,
And fierce *Orion* ſhakes the lab'ring Poles.
Fain would he ſeek the Shore, but from the Stern
The South drives on, and hinders his Return,
Till ſpent with uſeleſs Toil, and black Deſpair,
He quits his Art, and truſts to Fortune's Care.

Thus,

Thus, rack'd with Doubts, he chides the lazy Sun,
And bids the Hours with ſwifter Motion run.
Aurora now had ſhot a glimm'ring Ray,
And the Stars vaniſh'd from emergent Day;
When ſudden Tremors heav'd the guilty Ground,
And Heav'n and Earth rebellow'd to the Sound,
Signal of Woe—while from *Cithæron*'s Brow
Ruſh'd a diſſolving Stream of ancient Snow.
Upborne in Air aſpiring Roofs engage,
And the ſev'n Gates thrice claſh'd with martial Rage.
But *Mæon*, reſcued from th' expecting Jaws
Of wiſh'd Deſtruction, ſoon explains the Cauſe,
Proclaims the ſad Reverſe of partial Fate,
And threats Misfortunes to the *Theban* State.
For ere in open View he ſtood confeſt,
He deeply groan'd, and beat his manly Breaſt.
Thus fares a Shepherd, when returning Light
Reveals the Carnage of the former Night,
(Whoſe Flocks, retreating to ſome thicker Wood
From the rough Storm, a Troop of Wolves purſu'd)
Stretch'd on the Sand, he vents his Grief, yet fears
To bear the Tidings to his Maſter's Ears:

v. 47. *When ſudden Tremors*] This Diſaſter ſeems to be uſhered in with too much Pomp and Parade. A more ſurpriſing Aſſemblage of Phænomena could not have preceded the taking of *Thebes*. But ſome may ſay, all theſe Prodigies were preparatory to and preſaging of it. Perhaps they were ſo: but they ought to have happened at a ſhorter Diſtance from it; when every one muſt have been in Suſpenſe concerning the Fate of the City, and every thing that appeared like an Omen, intereſting and alarming.

v. 50. *Ruſh'd a diſſolving Stream*] This Article of the Snow's falling is mentioned by *Lucan* in the firſt Book of his *Pharſalia*.

——veteremque jugis nutantibus Alpes
Diſcuſſere nivem.

And, vex'd to find the Vallies bleat no more,
With plaintive Notes invokes the liſt'ning Shore.
But, when the Throng of Matrons at the Gate,
As yet unknowing their Relation's Fate,
Beheld him unattended, and alone,
They ruſh, diſtracted, through th' affrighted Town.
Inſtead of Queſtions, ſhrilling Clamors riſe,
And Shrieks renew'd by the retentive Skies.
Such is the Tumult, when, its Walls o'erthrown,
Bellona triumphs o'er ſome captive Town;
Or, when a Veſſel, hurried down the Steep
Of op'ning Surges, cleaves the nether Deep.
But, when the ſorrowing Prophet had obtain'd
Admiſſion to the King, and Audience gain'd;
This one (he cries) of fifty valiant lives
To bring the diſmal Meſſage *Tydeus* gives.
Thus Fortune or the 'vengeful Fates decreed,
Or Heav'n, to puniſh the perfidious Deed:
Or, what I ſpeak with Shame, and own with Grief,
The ſingle Valour of this mighty Chief.
E'en I can ſcarcely credit, who ſurvey'd
The bloody Progreſs of his reeking Blade.

v. 65. *And vex'd to find the Vallies*] The Poets often transfer the Cauſe of Sounds from the animal Authors of them, to the Place in which they are repreſented to be. Hence *Ovid* ſays the Plains low, and *Heſiod*, that the Mountains bleat.

v. 73. *Such is the Tumult*] *Homer* has a Simile ſomething like this upon the Conflagration occaſioned by the Death of *Hector*.

—— αμφι δε λαοι
Κ' αυτω τ' ειχοντο και οιμωγη κατα αστυ
Τω δε μαλιστ' αρ' ην ενδα, κιον, ωσει απασα
Ιλιος οφρυοεσσα πυρι μιχοιτο κατ' αμφις. B. 22. V. 408.

But

But you, O Manes of my Comrades ſlain,
And you, bright Ornaments of *Cynthia*'s Reign,
Atteſt, that Life unaſk'd the Victor gave,
And ſav'd me from a leſs inglorious Grave.
Thus the great Arbiters of Life and Death
Enjoin'd: nor can we yield our vital Breath,
Till the predeſtin'd, number'd Hours are come,
And Fate has ſeal'd th' irrevocable Doom.
Elſe had I fall'n in War, and giv'n to Fame,
What Nature craves, and *Pluto* ſoon will claim;
Nor thou, for whom *Bellona*'s Torch ſhall burn,
The Soldier bleed, and widow'd Beauty mourn,
Shalt from thy baniſh'd Brother long detain
The promis'd Empire, and alternate Reign:
Black Fate hangs over thy devoted Head,
Nor *Thebes*, divided from her King, ſhall bleed.
Full fifty Ghoſts ſhall their freſh Wounds diſcloſe,
And make thee loath the Seaſon of Repoſe.
More had he utter'd, but the Tyrant's Ire
Varied his Cheeks with Blood, his Eyes with Fire.
Swift from their Seats two daring Villains ſprung,
Prepar'd to ſilence his licentious Tongue.
Who prone, in all the King commands, t' obey,
Shone firſt at Court, and held the Reins of Sway.

v. 104. *Full fifty Ghoſts*] *Dido* threatens *Æneas* with the ſame Puniſhment.

> *Dido* ſhall come with a black ſulph'ry Flame,
> When Death has once diſſolv'd her mortal Frame.
> Shall ſmile to ſee thee, Tyrant, vainly weep,
> Her angry Ghoſt, ariſing from the Deep,
> Shall haunt thee waking, and diſturb thy Sleep.
>
> *Dryden, Æn.* 4.

Mean

Mean while the Prophet views his naked Sword,
Then ſmiles at the ſtern Aſpect of his Lord;
And cries—The Fates forbid thee to command
A Life uninjur'd by great *Tydeus'* Hand.
My Soul, diſcharg'd by this auſpicious Blade,
Shall join my Comrades in th' *Elyſian* Shade.
Thus *Mæon:* the preventing Steel ſuppreſt
Th' imperfect Sounds, and quivers in his Breaſt.
His Mouth and Wound emit a crimſon Flood,
And form a Channel of united Blood:
While Nature ſhivers at approaching Death,
And ſtruggles to retain the parting Breath.
Smit with the Dread of theſe portended Woes,
The Nobles murmur, and the Senate roſe.
While Faction to her Side the Rabble draws,
And with invented Tales ſupports her Cauſe.
Mean while the Prophet's Friends unite their Aid,
And on their Shoulders Home the Corſe convey'd.
Frowning he ſeem'd as in Contempt of Death;
Nor fled his Sternneſs with the vital Breath.
But the fierce Tyrant's Rage as yet ſurviv'd,
Unquenchable as when its Object liv'd.
Repuls'd with Threats the Patriot's Friends retire,
Nor dare to raiſe him a funereal Pyre.

v. 129. *Frowning he ſeem'd*] *Lucan* has ſome few Lines on the Appearance of *Pompey*'s Countenance after Death.

Nor Agonies, nor livid Death diſgrace
The ſacred Features of the Hero's Face;
In the cold Viſage, mournfully ſerene,
The ſame indignant Majeſty was ſeen;
There Virtue, ſtill unchangeable, abode,
And ſcorn'd the Spite of ev'ry partial God.
Rowe, Lib. 8. V. 901.

v. 133. *Repuls'd with Threats*] This Prohibition of the King's is the more inſiſted on by the Poet, becauſe the Ancients had nothing in

Yet reſt, illuſtrious Shade, nor fear the Rage
Of envious Slander, or oblivious Age.
But Oh! what Numbers can thy Virtue paint;
(The ſtronger Image makes Deſcription faint)
That Virtue, which th' Uſurper durſt oppoſe,
And warn his Country of impending Woes:
Which Partnerſhip in Guilt did e'er diſclaim,
And ſought the Path to Freedom and to Fame.
Apollo crown'd thy Worth with early Bays,
Nor bluſh'd with thee to ſhare prophetic Praiſe;
The Nymph of *Cyrrha* ſilent ſhall remain,
Nor fam'd *Dodona*'s Oak an Anſwer deign:
While round the Shrine ſuſpended Nations wait,
And bribe in vain th' Interpreter of Fate.
Let fair *Elyſium* hence thy Preſence boaſt
Sequeſter'd from the dark *Tartarean* Coaſt;
Where, nor *Eteocles* exerts his Reign,
Nor ſervile *Thebans* brook the galling Chain.
Tho' foul in Duſt, yet undisfigur'd lies
The Carcaſe, guarded by the pitying Skies.
Untouch'd by Dogs remain his Limbs and Face,
While Birds retire in Rev'rence of the Place.

in greater Horror than the Want of Burial. *Virgil* ſays, that the unburied on the Banks of *Styx*

Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc littora circum,
Tum demum admiſſi, ſtagna exoptata reviſunt.
Æneid, B. 6. V. 329.

v. 153. *Tho' foul in Duſt*] The Ancients held nothing, except Life itſelf, in greater Value than the Burial of their Bodies entire and undiſmembered: Hence *Priam* in the 24th Book of the Iliad, thus interrogates *Mercury* about the Fate of *Hector*.

Η ετι πχρ ινεσσιν εμος πατις, ηε μιν ηδη
Ησι κυσιν μελεεσι τεμων πρυθηκεν Αχιλλευς. V. 409.

Mean

Mean while th' *Aetolian* Hero's Feats engage
The Senate's Care, and fire the Youth with Rage.
Here Age and Sex no more Diſtinction know,
But all with an impatient Ardor glow,
To view the Labours of a ſingle Chief,
Chear the young Bride, and ſoothe the Parent's Grief,
The weeping Croud a doleful Concert yields,
While plaintive Echo from the neighb'ring Fields
Sigh ſtill with ſighing anſwers, Groan with Groan,
And ſeems to mourn for Sorrows not her own.
But when they reach'd th' unhabitable Wood,
And Rocks that hang incumbent o'er the Flood,
A ſudden Tumult ſhakes the nether Plain,
(As if the Dead had yet unpitied lain)
From one huge Mouth the Clamour ſeems to flow,
And all th' Aſſembly wears one Face of Woe;
In tatter'd Robes the God of Sorrow ſtands;
Stern is his Aſpect, bloody are his Hands:
He beckons to his Vot'ries, and ſupplies
Their Lungs with Vigour, and with Tears their Eyes,
They lift the Helmets and rejoice to trace
The well-known Features of each kindred Face;

v. 167. *But, when they reach'd*] In this Prelude Statius has prepared us for all the ſucceeding Calamities of *Thebes*, and has given us (as it were) all the Horrors of War in Miniature. The laſt Book left us highly prepoſſeſſed in Favour of *Tydeus*; but the Poet now, like a ſkilful Muſician, changes his Note, and melts us into Pity and Tenderneſs. Even the Valour of *Tydeus* loſes its Luſtre, when we reflect on the fatal Conſequences with which it was attended.

v. 173. *In tatter'd Robes the God of Sorrow*] This Perſonification of the Paſſions is entirely original, and very well executed. The Figure, Countenance and Habit are very conſiſtent with the God of Sorrow, and the two laſt Lines very natural and highly finiſhed.

Hang

Hang o'er the clay-cold Bodies, ſhed a Flood
Of Tears, and ſteep their Hair in clotted Blood:
Or ſeal their Eyes, and, groveling on the Ground,
Bathe with the Stream of Grief each gaping Wound.
While ſome with fruitleſs Care extract the Darts,
Or join the ſever'd Limbs and kindred Parts.
But wretched *Ide* ruſhes to and fro,
In all the raging Impotence of Woe.
Thro' Thorns and Clouds of Duſt ſhe bends her Way;
She rends her Treſſes venerably grey.
Horror accompanies each ſtreaming Tear,
Nor the Spectators pity her, but fear.
She ſeeks her Sons among the num'rous Dead,
And mingles with the Duſt her aged Head.
Thus the *Theſſalian* Hag, at whoſe Command
Reviving Phantoms leave the *Stygian* Strand,
In bloody Fields explores her lifeleſs Prey,
Lur'd with the Carnage of the former Day,

v. 185. *But wretched* Ide] The Character and Diſtreſs of a tender Mother are admirably well ſupported, and deſcribed in the Perſon of *Ide*. But what gives the higheſt Colouring, is the Poet's Remark, that her Countenance rather excited Horror than Compaſſion in the Hearts of the Spectators. A common Poet would have deſcribed her as weeping and wringing her Hands in a regular Manner; but *Statius* repreſents her as frantic. She has not the Face of a tender Mother, but of a Fury; and does not lament, but rave.

v. 493. *Thus the* Theſſalian *Hag*] I muſt beg Leave to refer my Reader to the Deſcription of the Sorcereſs *Erictho*, as drawn in the ſixth Book of *Lucan*'s *Pharſalia*, in my Opinion one of the fineſt Paſſages in that Author. The Likeneſſes are too ſtrong to eſcape his Obſervation, and I doubt not but the Pleaſure he will meet with, will abundantly compenſate for the Trouble of referring to it.

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When

When Night, propitious to her myſtic Charms,
O'er the wide Globe extends her ſable Arms,
To various Carcaſes, by Turns ſhe flies,
And, bending, o'er them rolls her haggard Eyes:
Then, mutt'ring magic Sounds with impious Voice
Demands on which to fix her doubtful Choice.
The Ghoſts, with Horror eye the World again,
And *Pluto* ſorrows for his thin'd Domain.
Beneath a Rock the happy Brothers lay,
And ſhar'd alike the Fortune of the Fray.
One Day, one Hand ſuppreſs'd their vital Breath,
And lock'd them in inſeparable Death.
When *Ide* ſaw, her brim-full Eyes diſcloſe
A pearly Stream, and thus ſhe ſpeaks her Woes.
Are theſe your Kiſſes? this your laſt Embrace,
And theſe the Smiles which Death could not efface?
Has Fate, propitious to the mutual Vow,
Preſerv'd your Union in the Shades below?

v. 205. *Beneath a Rock*] I need not acquaint the Reader who theſe two Brothers were, if he has attentively read what has gone before: but, if his Memory ſhould fail him, let him return to the 816th Verſe of the 2d Book, where he will be fully ſatisfied.

v. 211. *Are theſe your Kiſſes*] There is no Speech in the whole Thebaid more worthy our Attention than this of *Ide*. The Reader will not find in it a Collection of trite Sentiments, and Common-Place Obſervations; but will, I doubt not, think it the moſt rational, pertinent and ſpirited Speech in the whole Poem. I ſhall do *Statius* but common Juſtice to ſay, that his Art is here as much ſuperior to that of *Virgil* in the Speech of *Euryalus*'s Mother, as the Æneid is upon the whole to the Thebaid. *Ide* really talks like a ſenſible, philoſophical Matron; ſhe does not wiſh her Sons had eſcaped with Life, but that they had fallen in a more honourable and conſpicuous Manner. I only wonder ſhe ſo well recovered the Uſe of her Reaſon, as to throw out theſe Reflections, ſince her Appearance at firſt gave us little Ground to expect it.

But

But ſay, whoſe languid Eyes, unhappy Pair,
Whoſe Wounds ſhall firſt employ a Mother's Care?
Are you, late Objects of my Hopes and Fears,
The Boaſt and Prop of my declining Years!
How chang'd, alas! my Offspring ſince I ſtrove
To match the Daughters of Almighty *Jove*,
More happy ſhe, to whom the Queen of Air
Denies a Parent's ſhort-liv'd Joys to ſhare.
By whom *Lucina* uninvok'd remains,
Who, if ſhe taſtes no Pleaſures, feels no Pains.
Yet 'twould have been ſome Shadow of Relief,
Some ſmall Allay, and Solace of my Grief,
Had Fame, the dying Hero's only Meed,
Shone on your Tomb, and blaz'd the glorious Deed:
But here, alas! your Lives obſcure you yield,
Nor public Praiſe ſurvives the deathful Field.
Reſt then, and may no Violence remove
This farced Emblem of fraternal Love,
One Fire ſhall your connected Bodies burn,
And your pale Aſhes grace one common Urn.
Others mean while, in equal Strains lament
Their lifeleſs Friends, and curſe the dire Event.
This mourns a Father, this a Brother dead,
And that a Partner of the nuptial Bed.
High on a neighb'ring Hill a Thicket ſtood,
Whoſe conſcious Height o'erlooks the Field of Blood:
At this the *Thebans* level all their Strokes,
And humble to the Ground the talleſt Oaks.
Till thro' the Trees they cleave an open Way,
And the dark Grove admits a ſudden Day.
While, clinging to the Piles, they ſhun Relief,
Averſe to Comfort, and o'ercharg'd with Grief.

Aletbes ſtrove to calm their growing Rage
A Chief advanc'd in Wiſdom as in Age.
Oft, on the Verge of Ruin, has our State
Become the Sport of Fortune and of Fate;
Since *Cadmus* ſow'd with Serpent's Teeth the Soil
And reap'd an Iron Harveſt of his Toil,
When, ſcar'd with the new Sounds of claſhing Shields,
The Swain forſakes his patrimonial Fields.
Yet never did the Sons of *Cadmus* ſhew
So deep a Senſe, ſuch Conſciouſneſs of Woe,
E'en when the Palace of *Agenor*'s Son
With waſting Flames, and bright Deſtruction ſhone:
Or *Athamas*, in queſt of Glory, ſlew
His Son, and home the panting Carcaſe drew.
Not with ſuch Shrieks the *Theban* Palace rung,
When from her Throne the fierce *Agave* ſprung,
And knew the Victim of her vengeful Sword,
To Senſe and Mis'ry at once reſtor'd.
If aught could match the preſent Scene of Woe,
'Twas when the Patron of the Silver Bow,
Diſpatch'd for *Niobe*'s ambitious Boaſt,
Her num'rous Offspring to the *Stygian* Coaſt.
Such dire Alarms the tim'rous Vulgar ſhook
And thus in Crouds the City they forſook.
Then ev'ry Temple rung with frequent Groans,
And ev'ry God was weary'd with their Moans.
Sev'n ample Gates imperial *Thebes* adorn,
Through each in Pomp two Funerals were borne.

v. 259. *Or* Athamas] For an Account of *Athamas*, ſee the Note on the 15th Verſe of the firſt Book.

v. 273. *Sev'n ample Gates*] The Ancients differ concerning the Number of *Niobe*'s Children. *Homer* and *Propertius* mention only twelve;

Well I remember, tho' my tender Years,
And Youth might well excuſe my Want of Tears,
I mourn'd the Vengeance of th' immortal Foe,
And from my Parents catch'd th' infectious Woe.
Yet leſs we ſhould lament (for Tears are vain)
At what the Fates and equal *Jove* ordain.
As when, unconſcious of the Form impos'd,
The ſhouting Youths and eager Hounds enclos'd
Actæon, who by fatal Stealth ſurvey'd
The naked Beauties of the bathing Maid.
Or the chang'd Virgin bath'd the *Theban* Plains,
Whoſe Name the grateful Fountain ſtill retains.
For this the Siſter-Deſtinies decreed,
And *Jove* aſſented to the future Deed.

twelve; but *Euripides*, *Ovid*, *Sidonius* and *Seneca* the Tragedian affirm there were fourteen. *Statius* coincides with the latter, as appears from the above Paſſage.

v. 281. *As when, unconſcious*] Inſtead of ſaying any thing of *Actæon*, whoſe Misfortune every one is acquainted with, I ſhall preſent the Reader with *Ovid*'s Deſcription of his Transformation.

—— Nec plura minata
Dat ſparſo capiti vivacis cornua cervi,
Dat ſpatium collo, ſummaſque cacuminat aures;
Cum pedibuſque manus, cum longis brachia mutat
Cruribus, et velat maculoſo vellere corpus.
Additus et pavor eſt. Fugit Autoneius Heros,
Et ſe tam celerem curſu miratur in ipſo:
Ut vero vultus, et cornua vidit in undâ,
Me miſerum! dicturus erat: Vox nulla ſecuta eſt;
Ingemuit, vox illa fuit, lacrymæque per ora
Non ſua fluxerunt. Mens tantum priſtina manſit.
Metam. Lib. 3. Fab. 2.

v. 285. *Or the chang'd Virgin*] *Dirce* was the Wife of *Lycus* after the Divorcement of *Antiopa*, whoſe two Sons afterwards killed *Lycus*, and bound *Dirce* to the Tail of a wild Horſe, by which ſhe was dragged up and down, till the Gods, taking Compaſſion of her Misfortunes, changed her into a Fountain of that Name.

But now the weeping Sons of *Thebes* atone
For Royal Crimes, and Miſchiefs not their own,
Ere Fame, tho' haſt'ning with the firſt Report
Of War proclaim'd, has reach'd the *Argive* Court.
How ſhall the gaſping Nations pant for Breath,
What Labours riſe, what various Scenes of Death!
What breathleſs Heaps, what ruſhing Streams of Blood
Shall dye the Ground, and ſwell the neighb'ring Flood.
Unhappy Youths, whom Fortune only ſpares
For greater Evils, which ſhe now prepares:
Me Nature ſummons to the Shades below,
And kindly ſnatches from approaching Woe.
Thus ſpoke the Sage; and from the Tyrant's Crimes
Dates all the Miſchief of ſucceeding Times:
For on his Mind no conſcious Terrors hung,
Nor check'd the honeſt Freedom of his Tongue.
Reſolv'd to die, while Life was in his Pow'r,
Nor linger to the laſt predeſtin'd Hour.
Mean while the ſcepter'd Ruler of the Skies
To weeping *Thebes* directs his awful Eyes,
Surveys the Carnage of the former Night,
And ſummons *Mars* to plan the future Fight.
Who, loaded with the Spoils of conquer'd *Thrace*,
Impell'd his Steeds along th' aerial Space.

v. 293. *How ſhall the gaſping Nations*] This is copied from *Horace*, Book 1. Ode 15. The Words of *Statius* are,

> Quantus equis, quantuſque viris in pulvere craſſo
> Sudor.

Thoſe of *Horace*,

> Ehen quantus equis, quantus adeſt viris
> Sudor!

His

His Helm with borrow'd Lightning fires the Pole,
Beneath his Car inceſſant Thunders roll.
His Arms, enliven'd by the Sculptor's Art;
With golden Monſters brave each hoſtile Dart;
While his Shield bears the Sun's reflected Ray,
Nor ſhines inferior to the God of Day.
When *Jove* beheld him in his bloody Car,
Array'd in all the Terrors of the War,
He cries—Let *Argos* feel thy waſting Force,
And Death and Slaughter mark thy dreadful Courſe:
Still on thy Viſage may theſe Clouds remain,
And cauſe a purple Deluge o'er the Plain.
Let *Thebes* no more the Rage of *Tydeus* mourn,
But breathe Revenge, and for the Combat burn;
To thee devote her Warriors' Lives and Hands,
And freely execute thy dire Commands.
From hence repair to rouſe the States of *Greece*,
Diſſolve the Truce, and break the Bonds of Peace.

v. 313. *His Helm with borrow'd Lightning*] This Deſcription of *Mars* is full of that ſublime Imagery ſo peculiar to our Author. The God of War is not arrayed in his own ſimple Terrors, but calls in to his Aſſiſtance thoſe of *Jupiter* and *Apollo*. The Noiſe of his Chariot is equal to that of Thunder, and the Splendor of his Helmet to Lightning, while the Orb of his Shield matches that of the Sun. The Invention of his Paſſage from *Thrace* (which was feigned to be the Country of that God) is a very beautiful and poetical Manner of celebrating the martial Genius of that People, who were engaged in perpetual Wars.

v. 323. *Still on thy Viſage*] In this beautiful Allegory we may diſcover an amazing Boldneſs and exact Propriety of Expreſſion. This Chain or Continuation of Metaphors is reducible (tho' much ſuperior) to a Simile. *Jupiter* wiſhes, that the Frowns on the Brow of *Mars* might be as productive of an Effuſion of Blood, as Clouds are of a Shower of Rain. If this is not the *Curioſa felicitas* of *Quintilian*, I know not where it exiſts.

'Tis thine in Heav'n to kindle fierce Debate,
And fire immortal Breasts with mutual Hate.
Nor is this Task assign'd to thee alone;
Jove has himself the Seeds of Discord sown:
See *Tydeus*, loaded with *Bœotian* Spoils,
To *Argos* bears the Product of his Toils.
From his Report shall lasting Strife succeed,
And either Candidate for Empire bleed.
Thou but inspire the Nations with Belief,
And arm them to revenge their injur'd Chief.
Hear then, ye Pow'rs, and what you hear, approve,
Nor with Intreaties tempt almighty *Jove*.
For thus th' impartial Destinies decreed,
And have our Sanction to compleat the Deed.
While Nature yet in wild Confusion lay,
Nor *Phœbe* rul'd the Night, nor *Sol* the Day;
The Fates had seal'd this Nation's future Doom,
And laid the Plan of Battles yet to come.
Permit me then to warn succeeding Times,
(Avenging on the Son his Father's Crimes)

v. 343. *For thus th' impartial Destinies*] The Learned differ in their Opinions concerning the Power of the *Fates* and *Jupiter*: some affirming the former, and others the latter to be superior. But I think the best Way is to steer the middle Course, and suppose them endued with an equal Degree of Authority, and always acting in Conjunction. As here Fate decrees the Destruction of *Thebes*; but *Jupiter*, having the Power of Incidents to bring it to pass, fulfils that Decree by providing Means for it. *Jupiter* begins his Speech to the Gods in a similar Manner in the 8th Book of *Homer*.

Κίκλυτέ μευ πάντες τε θεοὶ, πᾶσαί τε θέαιναι,
Ὄφρ' εἴπω τά με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει.
Μήτε τις ἦν θηλεια θεὸς τόγε, μητε τις ἄρσην
Πειράτω διακέρσαι ἐμὸν ἔπος· ἀλλ' ἅμα πάντες
Αἰνεῖτ', ὄφρα τάχιστα τελευτήσω τάδε ἔργα.

Verse 5.

And

And trace from the Records of diſtant Age
Paſt Actions which deſerve my preſent Rage.
For, by the Glories of the ſtarry Sphere,
And *Styx*, whoſe awful Name the Gods revere,
This dreaded Arm ſhall cruſh the *Theban* Race,
And rend each Structure from its ſolid Baſe;
In one huge Ruin heap the Realms around,
And level *Argive* Turrets with the Ground:
Then bid the Deep no more Confinement know,
And give to *Neptune* all the World below.
In vain ſhall *Juno* deprecate its Fall;
Or, clinging to her Fane's devoted Wall,
Of angry *Jove*, and partial Fate complain:
Reſent ſhe may, but muſt reſent in vain.
He ſpoke: nor durſt the Pow'rs of Heav'n reply:
A rev'rend Horror ſilenc'd all the Sky.
Such Stillneſs o'er the Face of Nature reigns,
When Summer ſmiles auſpicious on the Plains;
When not a Breath of Air diſturbs the Deep,
And Billows on the Shore reclining ſleep:
The peaceful Groves retain their youthful Green,
And not a Cloud o'ercaſts the beauteous Scene;
While, half-exhauſted by the thirſty Sun;
Beneath their Banks the peaceful Rivers run.
Mean while the God of Arms prepares for Fight,
Reſumes the floating Reins, and ſhuns the Right.
Prone down the Steep of Heav'n the Chariot flies,
Glows in the Whirl, and burns along the Skies.
When *Venus*, Offspring of the briny Flood,
To ſtay his dreaded Progreſs adverſe ſtood.

v. 379. *When* Venus, *Offspring*, &c.] The Ancients (to whom we owe many Things) firſt taught us to turn the Virtues and Endowments

The Steeds recoil'd, reluctant to the Reins,
And ſmoothe, in Rev'rence, their erected Manes:
Then champ, in Honour of th' acknowledg'd Fair,
The foaming Bit, and ſnuff the trembling Air.
Her ſnowy Boſom gently preſs'd the Yoke,
And thus, with previous Tears, the Goddeſs ſpoke:
Will *Mars* with his own Offspring then engage,
And on a guiltleſs Nation vent his Rage?
Say, ſhall the Product of our mutual Love,
And theſe my Tears e'er unavailing prove?
Did I for this conſent to your Embrace,
Bereft of Honour, branded with Diſgrace?
Go then; thy Flight no longer I detain;
Go; bathe in kindred Blood the *Theban* Plain.
Yet *Vulcan* (tho' from him I little claim)
Not thus would ſlight the Object of his Flame.

ments of the Mind into Perſons, to make the Springs of Action become viſible; and becauſe they are given by the Gods, repreſent them as Gods themſelves deſcending from Heaven. In the ſame Manner they deſcribed the Vices, which occaſion our Misfortunes, as ſupernatural Powers, inflicting them upon us, and even our natural Puniſhments are repreſented as Puniſhers themſelves. Hence it is, that we find *Juno* and *Minerva* on the one ſide, and *Venus* on the other, in continual Variance through the whole Iliad, Æneid, and Thebaid.

v. 387. *Will* Mars *then*] This Speech of *Venus* is written in the Spirit of *Dido*'s to *Æneas*; and in many Places not only the Sentiment, but even the Diction is ſimilar, as for Example:

Say, ſhall the Product] ſo *Virgil*,
Nec te noſter Amor, nec te data dextera quondam,
Nec moritura tenet crudeli funere Dido?

Did I for this conſent, &c.]
Extinctus pudor, et, quâ ſolâ ſidera adibam,
Fama prior.

Go then; thy Flight, &c.]
Neque te teneo, neque dicta refello.
I, ſequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas.

How

How would th' uxorious God at my Demand
In Toils unceaſing ply his ſkilful Hand.
And ſcarcely doubt (ſo valued are my Charms)
For *Mars* himſelf to frame immortal Arms.
But hold, nor let me waſte my Time in vain;
Or hope from *Mars* a trifling Suit to gain:
Can Hearts of Adamant, or Breaſts of Steel
The gentle Impulſe of Compaſſion feel?
Yet ſay, for what, by whoſe Inducements won,
You ſought Alliance with *Agenor*'s Son;
And forc'd the Pledge of our Delights to ſhare
Woes ſhe deſerves not, and another's Care?
You promis'd once a Progeny divine
Of *Thebans* riſing from the *Tyrian* Line
Should ſtand renown'd in Arms and martial Fame,
And to ſucceeding Times tranſmit their Name.
But had the Fates aſſented to my Vows,
More diſtant Climes had yielded her a Spouſe,
Where endleſs Winter *Thracian* Seas conſtrains,
And binds the frozen Flood in chryſtal Chains.
Yet could my Tears but bid the *Thebans* live;
Theſe ancient Crimes I could with Eaſe forgive:
Though on erected Spires our Daughter roves,
And darts freſh Poiſon on th' *Illyrian* Groves.

v. 407. *And forc'd the Pledge*] This was *Harmonia*, who was married to *Cadmus*.

v. 409. *You promis'd once*] The ſame Goddeſs reminds *Jupiter* of a like Promiſe concerning *Æneas* and his Companions.

Certè hinc Romanos olim volventibus annis,
Hinc fore ductores revocato a ſanguine Teucri,
Qui mare, qui terras omni ditione tenerent.
Virg. Æneid, Lib. 1. Verſe 238.

Thus ſpoke the Fair, with Sorrow-ſtreaming Eye,
When the fierce God, half willing to comply,
Leap'd from his Car, and ruſhing to her Arms,
With eager Eyes devour'd her heav'nly Charms:
At length replies; while ſympathetic Woe
Unbends his Soul, and bids the Torrent flow.
O dearer far than War, or hoſtile Spoils,
Source of my Bliſs, and Solace of my Toils!
To whom alone of all the Pow'rs of Heav'n
To meet my dreaded Arms, unhurt, 'tis giv'n,
To ſtop my Courſers in their full Career,
And bid my Hand diſmiſs the brandiſh'd Spear.
Your former Favors I can ne'er forget;
Nor Words expreſs, nor Deeds diſcharge the Debt:
But e'er Oblivion ſhall thy Name eraſe,
Or make me ſlow in *Cytherea*'s Praiſe;
May *Pluto*, and the Shades of *Orcus* claim
This Soul, bereft of its immortal Frame.

v. 425. *And ruſhing to her Arms*] In the common Editions the Words are,

Clyeoque receptam
Lædit in amplexu.

But *Barthius* very reaſonably objects to this as erroneous, and corrects it thus

Iligat amplexu.

which Senſe I have adopted in the Tranſlation.

v. 429. *To whom alone*] Here is a latent Prohibition to *Venus* to repeat the ſame Indiſcretion: He tells her, that ſhe alone, being the weakeſt of all the Gods, could have done it with Impunity.

v. 435. *But, ere Oblivion*] Theſe voluntary Imprecations were cuſtomary among the Ancients. Thus *Dido*:

Sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiſcat;
Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam,
Ante, pudor, quam te violo, aut tua jura reſolvo. Lib. 4.

Mean

Mean while, O Queen, permit me to fulfil
The Fates' Decree, and *Jove*'s unalter'd Will:
(For here thy *Vulcan* little would avail,
And all his boaſted Art and Labours fail)
Hard is the Taſk, alas! you now enjoin,
T' oppoſe the Lord of Æther's fix'd Deſign.
I war not with the Higheſt: all above
Submit and tremble at the Hand of *Jove*,
Then baniſh Sorrow, and your Fears reſign,
(Secure, what *Mars* can do, is ever thine)
And bear with Patience what the Fates ordain,
To thwart is Raſhneſs, and Reſiſtance vain:
But, when *Bellona* waves her flaming Brand,
And ſummons to the War each *Argive* Band,
Myſelf will head in Fight the *Theban* Train,
And heap with ſlaughter'd Foes the crimſon Plain.
Then, Goddeſs ſay, will *Mars* unjuſt appear,
When *Argive* Blood ſhall ſmoke upon his Spear?
This Right I challenge in the Field of Fame,
This Fate allows, nor *Jove* diſputes my Claim.
He ſpoke: and, eager for the promis'd War,
Urg'd o'er the vaſt Expanſe his rapid Car.
Thus falls the Bolt, when from the Northern Pole,
Jove bares his Arm, and bids the Thunder roll;

v. 441. *For here thy* Vulcan] Here is a ſarcaſtical Reflection on the Infirmity of *Vulcan*, and an Hint of his own Superiority. His Oration is delivered with the uſual Bluntneſs of a Soldier, and his ſubſequent Behaviour highly conſiſtent. He does not ſtay to ſee what Impreſſion his Excuſe, will make on the Mind of *Venus*, or whether his Offers in Part will compenſate for his non-compliance with the whole; but hurries on with a ſeeming Indifference about the Reſult of it.

v. 461. *Thus falls the Bolt*] *Lucan* has made Uſe of the ſame Compariſon in the firſt Book of his *Pharſalia*:

Qualiter

Pregnant with Death the glaring Miſchief flies,
And cleaves a triple Furrow in the Skies:
A fatal Omen to the greedy Swain,
Or trembling Sailors on the wat'ry Main.
Mean while young *Tydeus* ſeeks the winding Shore,
And meaſures back the Fields he croſs'd before.
His Eyes, attracted with the diſtant Glare,
Survey the Temple of the Queen of Air.
His Hair grew ſtiff with Duſt and mingled Gore,
While Streams of Sweat diſtil from ev'ry Pore;
His Eyes, bereft of wonted Sleep, diſplay
A ſanguine Hue, and ſicken at the Day.
His Toil increaſes, as his Breath he draws,
And parching Thirſt inflames his clammy Jaws:
Yet, unimpair'd by Toils, or hoſtile Blows,
His Soul with undiminiſh'd Ardor glows.
Thus, when the Victor-Bull ſurveys again
The ſubject Herd, and late-abandon'd Plain;
He roars, and, traverſing the Fields around,
Proclaims his Conqueſt in each ecchoing Ground:
Or eyes the ſwelling Honours of his Breaſt,
And Blood, his Adverſary once poſſeſt.
While from afar, his Rival with a Groan,
Surveys the pleaſing Kingdoms once his own.
Mean while *Oenides*, as he paſs'd along,
In ev'ry Town convenes the ruſtic Throng:

Qualiter expreſſum ventis per nubila fulmen
Ætheris impulſi ſonitu, mundique fragore
Emicuit, rupitque diem, populoſque paventes
Terruit, obliquâ præſtringens lumina flammâ:
In ſua templa furit: nullâque exire vetante
Materiâ, magnamque cadens, magnamque revertens
Dat ſtragem late, ſparſoſque recolligit ignes.

His

His Words the Crowd to yield him Aid engage,
And fire the Youth already prone to Rage.
His Country, Name, by whom, and whither ſent,
Are ſoon divulg'd, and what the dire Event.
The Sight and Tale of the returning Chief,
Among the trembling Croud enforce Belief:
Then, ſent by *Mars*, officious Fame appears,
Removes each Doubt, and doubles all their Fears.
Scarce had he reach'd the Palace, when he view'd
Adraſtus, ſtudious of the public Good,
Amidſt his Peers enthron'd; while thus they ſate,
Attentive to the Subject in Debate,
Arms, Arms, he cries: Now Monarch, may'ſt thou prove
Thy Blood, and martial Heat deriv'd from *Jove*.
Juſtice and Piety are now no more,
And ſlighted Faith has fled the *Theban* Shore.
More amicable Treatment had I found
Where endleſs Slaughter dyes the *Scythian* Ground:
Or the ſtern * Guardian of *Bebrycia*'s Grove
Once reign'd, in Scorn of hoſpitable *Jove*.
Nor blame I thoſe, by whom it was enjoin'd,
Nor mourn, repentant of the Taſk aſſign'd.
By *Jove* 'twas pleaſant to diſpute the Claim
Of boaſting *Thebes* to military Fame.
Full fifty Chiefs, (forgive the ſeeming Boaſt)
The Flow'r, the Pride, the Bulwark of their Hoſt,
Came forth as if to ſtorm ſome leaguer'd Town,
O'erthrow its Walls, or throw its Ramparts down.
Tho' naked and unarm'd, I ſcorn'd to fly,
Reſolv'd to conquer, or with Honor die.

* Busiris.

But

But hear the Sequel: all in Fight o'erthrown,
Lie wallowing in their Blood before the Town.
But oh! what Trophies muſt the *Thebans* yield,
Would *Argos* lead her Armies to the Field
While Fear prevails, while, ſcatter'd on the Plain,
They pay the laſt ſad Office to the Slain.
Myſelf will ſhare the Fortune of the Day,
Though theſe few Wounds require a ſhort Delay.
The Senate roſe: while with dejected Eyes,
The Warrior ſprung from *Cadmus*, thus replies.
How hateful to the Gods, alas! I'm grown,
To view thoſe Wounds, deſerv'd by me alone!
Was this, proud Chief, the only Way to ſhow
Thy cauſeleſs Hate, and prove thyſelf a Foe?
Then let me not—Ah! can I wiſh to live,
And *Tydeus*, wounded in my Cauſe, ſurvive?

v. 529. *How hateful to the Gods*] It is an exquiſite Piece of Art, when you ſeem to perſuade one Thing, and at the ſame Time enforce the contrary. This Kind of Rhetoric is of great Uſe in all Occaſions of Danger, and of this *Statius* has afforded a moſt ſtriking Inſtance in the Oration of *Polynices*. It is a Method perfectly wonderful, and even carries in it an Appearance of Abſurdity; for all that we generally eſteem the Faults of Oratory by this Means become the Virtues of it. Nothing is looked upon as a greater Error in a Rhetorician, than to alledge ſuch Arguments as either are eaſily anſwered, or may be retorted upon himſelf; the former is a weak Part, the latter a dangerous one; and *Polynices* here deſignedly deals in both. For it is plain that if a Man muſt not uſe weak Arguments, or ſuch as may make againſt him, when he intends to perſuade the Thing he ſays; then on the other Side, when he does not intend it, he muſt obſerve the contrary Proceeding, and make what are the Faults of Oratory in general, the Excellencies of that Oration in particular, or otherwiſe he will contradict his own Intention, and perſuade the contrary to what he means. I have dwelt the longer on this Remark, to render the Beauty of this Speech more viſible and obvious; and to prevent any ſcrupulous Objections, which might be of Diſadvantage to our Author.

Mean

Mean while, may *Argos* flouriſh in Repoſe,
Nor owe to me the Cauſe of future Woes:
No Matron, angry for her Children ſlain,
Of me, the Source of Miſchief, ſhall complain.
No Widow ſhall of me her Spouſe require,
Nor Orphan, weeping for his abſent Sire.
I ruſh to Death, nor ſeek ye to detain;
'Tis Honour prompts me, and you urge in vain.
To *Tydeus*, *Thebes*, my Country, this I owe,
Their Welfare claims, nor I retard the Blow.
Thus veil'd the Chief the Wiſhes of his Mind,
And artfully pronounc'd the Speech deſign'd.
At firſt his Audience wept the injur'd Chief:
Now ſtronger Wrath ſupplies the Place of Grief.
Nor did the Youth alone impatient glow,
To wreſt the Scepter from th' uſurping Foe:
A like Reſentment fires the Breaſt of Age,
And rouz'd the dying Sparks of martial Rage.
One Will inclin'd to draw the glitt'ring Blade,
One Voice declar'd their Promiſes of Aid.
But old *Adraſtus*, great in Arts of Sway,
And Prudence, thus enjoins a ſhort Delay,

v. 555. *But old* Adraſtus] The Reader may perhaps be at a Loſs to conceive how *Adraſtus*, who had promiſed *Polynices* his Aid in Caſe of a Rupture between him and his Brother, ſhould heſitate one Moment about fulfilling his Engagement, after ſuch a complicated Series of ill Uſage from *Eteocles*. But there were many Reaſons, which will juſtify this Conduct: ſuch as the Care of his own Safety (for it was uncertain what would be the Event of his taking up Arms.) Secondly, the Prevention of thoſe Calamities, which his People muſt neceſſarily undergo in the Courſe of a long War; and, Thirdly, the avoiding the Anger of the Gods, who ought always to be conſulted upon ſuch Occaſions, according to the Opinion of the Heathens. We may ſee then that this Suſpenſion of Hoſtilities was

And cries—A while, ye Sons of *Argos* ceaſe
From lawleſs Arms, nor violate the Peace.
To *Jove* and Kings alone the Right belongs
Of waging Battle, or avenging Wrongs.
Nor thou, young Warrior, of Redreſs deſpair,
Thy Welfare claims our ſeaſonable Care.
Let us on *Tydeus* now our Thoughts employ,
Nor be leſs prone to ſave than to deſtroy.
His Limbs oppreſs'd with Toil and hoſtile Blows,
In ſpeedy Sleep require a ſhort Repoſe.
Me too the ſame Deſire of Vengeance warms,
But Reaſon moderates the Love of Arms.
His Wife and Friends encloſe the weary Chief,
Anxious, and emulous to give Relief,
While he, reclining on a Pillar, ſtood,
Joyful amidſt his Toils and Loſs of Blood.
Fam'd *Idmon* was at Hand to prove his Art,
And to the wounded Warrior Eaſe impart.
One while, the Juice of lenient Herbs he tries,
Then bathes the Wound, or crooked Knife applies.
While he relates at large, from whence aroſe
The Wrath and Ambuſh of his *Theban* Foes.
How, ſent by Night, within the winding Way,
To bar his Paſſage, fifty Warriors lay.

was the Reſult of the moſt conſummate Prudence, ſtrict Piety, and patriotic Humanity.

v. 569. *His Friends and Wife*] This heroic Behaviour of *Tydeus* is copied from that of *Æneas* on a ſimilar Occaſion.

> Stabat acerba fremens, ingentem nixus in haſtam
> Æneas, magno juvenum, et mœrentis Iüli
> Concurſu, lacrymiſque immobilis. ——
>
> *Virgil's Æneid*, Lib. 12. Verſe 398.

And,

And, thoſe defeated in the gloomy Vale,
He ſpar'd but one to bear the dreadful Tale.
Caught with the Sound of theſe heroic Deeds,
Each Chief, in Proſpect, for his Country bleeds:
But *Polynices* moſt the Love of Fame,
And Thirſt of Empire and Revenge inflame.
The Sun, deſcending from th' aerial Steep,
Had gain'd the Confines of the Weſtern Deep,
And bath'd his Rays in the reflecting Flood;
His Courſers, panting on the Margin ſtood:
Till, ſwift emerging from their pearly Caves,
The Hours, and ſea-green Daughters of the Waves
Releas'd them from the Yoke and hated Reins,
To range at Will, and crop the verdant Plains.
'Twas theirs his foaming Horſes to unbrace,
And fix the Car on its immortal Baſe.
The Night ſucceeds, and wrapt in ambient Clouds,
In one huge Veil the whole Creation ſhrowds;
While Sleep conſigns each anxious Breaſt to Peace,
And bids the Howlings of the Foreſt ceaſe.

v. 591. *Till ſwift emerging*] This Circumſtance of the Hours' attending on the Sun, is an Imitation of a Paſſage in the 8th Book of the Iliad, where thoſe ſubaltern Deities are deſcribed as waiting on *Minerva*; but I think they are introduced with greater Propriety as Attendants on the Sun.

v. 597. *The Night ſucceeds*] The beſt Deſcription of Midnight I have ever met with is the following one of *Taſſo*.

Era la notte all' or, ch' alto ripoſo
Ha l' onde, e i venti, e parea muto il mondo,
Gli animai laſſi, e quei, che'l mar' ondoſo,
O de liquidi laghi alberga il fondo,
E chi ſi giace in Tana, ò in Mandra aſcoſo,
E i pinti Augelli nel' oblio profondo
Sotto il ſilentio de' ſecreti Orrori
Sopian gli affanni, e raddolciano i cori.

Gier. Lib. Can. 2.

Adraſtus

Adraſtus, and the *Theban* Prince alone
The Want of Sleep and inward Eaſe bemoan.
While *Tydeus* charg'd with viſionary Spoils,
In Dreams re-acts his late illuſtrious Toils.
Mean while, involv'd in Shades of deepeſt Night,
The God of War renews his airy Flight.
His rattling Armour thunders o'er the Sky,
The ſubject Hills and Vales in Turns reply.
Where e'er he moves, he kindles vengeful Fires,
And Love of War, and Thirſt of Blood inſpires.
Stern Wrath and Rage adjuſt his Courſers' Manes,
And Fear, array'd in Armour, guides the Reins.
Commiſſion'd by the God, before the Car
Fame flies, and ſounds aloud the Charge of War;
And, by the breathing Courſers wafted, ſprings
Aloft in Air, and ſhakes her clatt'ring Wings.
Oft premature, the watchful Goddeſs flies,
Feigns Things undone, and mingles Truth with Lies.
For *Mars*, and his impatient Charioteer
With Goads provoke her, and the *Scythian* Spear.

v. 605. *Mean while involv'd*] The Characteriſtic of *Statius*, as an heroic Poet, is an amazing Boldneſs in Imagery and Diction. To ſay he always reaches the pure Sublime, would be running counter to the Opinion of the beſt Critics, and conſequently preſumptuous and dogmatical. But to affirm he never does, would be equally unjuſt and unreaſonable. The preſent Paſſage is of the mixed Kind, and, at the ſame Time that it borders upon Fuſtian, is not wholly deſtitute of Sublimity. I will only add, that the moſt celebrated Inſtance of this Kind in *Homer* or *Virgil*, when reduced to the Standard of Reaſon, will ſeem a pleaſing Extravagance, and elaborate Piece of Nonſenſe.

v. 617. *Oft premature*] So *Virgil*,

Tam ficti pravique tenax, quam nuncia veri.

Æn. Book 4. Verſe 188.

Thus,

Thus, when diſmiſs'd from their *Æolian* Caves,
The Winds invade the calm *Ægean* Waves,
The Lord of Ocean follows; while around
The Tumult thickens, and the Deeps reſound.
Then Storms and Show'rs collected from afar,
Encloſe the God, and rage around his Car.
Scarce can the *Cyclades* the Shock ſuſtain,
And *Delos*, fearing leſt ſhe float again,
Invokes the Pow'r, by whoſe auſpicious Smiles
She ſtands connected with her Siſter-Iſles.
Now had the ſev'nth *Aurora* chac'd the Night,
And deck'd the Courts of *Jove* with new-born Light,
When old *Adraſtus* from his Couch aroſe,
And left his Chamber, ſatiate with Repoſe:
Revolving much within his lab'ring Breaſt
The future War, and Wrongs of either Gueſt:
And doubtful, whether to pollute the Peace,
And ſummon to his Aid the States of *Greece*;
Or for a Seaſon bid his Wrath ſubſide,
And leave the Fortune of the War untry'd.
Much he debates: At length reſolves to prove
The Will of Heav'n, and aſk Advice of *Jove*.
Peace was his Object, Peace his ſole Delight,
While *Argos* with one Voice demands the Fight.

v. 628. *And* Delos, *fearing leſt ſhe float*] I know not where this Paſſage is better illuſtrated than in the following Lines of *Virgil*;

Sacra mari colitur medio gratiſſima tellus
Nereidum matri, et Neptuno Ægeo;
Quam pius Arcitenens oras et littora circum
Errantem, Gyaro celsâ Myconeque revinxit,
Immotamque coli dedit, et contemnere ventos.

Æn. 3. *V.* 73.

v. 631. *Now had the ſev'nth* Aurora] Since *Tydeus* had returned from his Embaſſy to the Court of *Thebes*.

To the fam'd Son of *Oecleus*, ſkill'd to read
Each doubtful Omen, was the Charge decreed:
With him *Melampus* ſhares the Taſk aſſign'd,
Endu'd from Heav'n with a prophetic Mind.
Such was their Skill 'twas difficult to ſay
Which ſhone moſt honour'd by the God of Day,
Or in whoſe Draught a larger Portion flow'd
From *Cyrrha*, aidful to the Gift beſtow'd.
The Victims fall, and firſt the Chiefs explore
The reeking Fibres, and o'erflowing Gore:
Their Hearts, with Spots o'erſpread, Succeſs deny'd,
And the Veins threaten'd on the hoſtile Side.
Nor, thus diſcourag'd, did they yet deſpair,
But watch'd the wing'd Inhabitants of Air.
There ſtood a Mountain known to vulgar Fame,
Once ſacred held, and *Apheſus* its Name;
Whoſe craggy Top the weary Clouds ſuſtains,
And from afar o'erlooks the diſtant Plains.
Hence, Fame reports, young *Perſeus* wing'd his Way,
And ſought the Regions of eternal Day;

v. 651. *Or in whoſe Draught*] The Ancients had a Notion, that every one who had attained to any Degree of Skill in Divination, drank of this Stream, which was conſecrated to *Apollo*. *Cyrrha* was a Mountain near *Pindus*, from which this celebrated Stream deſcended with great Rapidity.

v. 655. *Their Hearts*] The ſame Prognoſtics happened, when the Romans conſulted the Gods concerning the Event of the Civil War between *Cæſar* and *Pompey*.

——— Pallida tetris
Viſcera tincta notis, gelidoque infecta cruore,
Plurimus aſperſo variabat ſanguine livor.
Cernit tabe jecur madidum: venaſque minaces
Hoſtili de parte videt. *Lucan. Pharſ.* B. 1, V. 763.

While

While *Danaë* ſurvey'd with wild Affright
The bold Attempt, and ſcarce refrain'd from Flight,
Hither each anxious Seer retir'd in Haſte,
With Olive-Leaves, and ſnow-white Chaplets grac'd;
What Time pale Winter flies the God of Day,
And Earth relenting feels the genial Ray,
Oeclides firſt prefer'd his humble Pray'r:
O thou, whoſe Thunder rends the clouded Air;
Inſpir'd by whom, each Vagrant of the Skies,
Fraught with Advice to wretched Mortals, flies;
Whoſe Wings the bold Enquirer's Fate diſcloſe;
And warn him of ſucceeding Bliſs or Woes.
Not *Cyrrha*'s Cave with more unerring Skill,
Unfolds the King of Heav'ns eternal Will;
Nor the fam'd Oaks, from whence the dark Decrees
Of Fate are heard, low-whiſper'd in the Breeze.
Ammon to them muſt yield the Prophet's Bays,
And *Lycian* Lots reſign their Share of Praiſe.

v. 666. *And ſcarce refrain'd from Flight*] The Poet has exhibited a very beautiful Image of motherly Affection in the Behaviour of *Danaë*. When ſhe ſaw her Son attempting to fly, her Anxiety for his Safety was ſo great, that ſhe almoſt reſolved to ſpring from the Rock and follow him; and could hardly be induced to relinquiſh her Deſign, even after ſhe had conſidered the Danger of the Attempt.

v. 677. *Not* Cyrrha's *Cave*] *Cyrrha* was a Town ſituated at the Foot of *Parnaſſus*, from whence the Oracle of *Apollo* was delivered.

v. 679. *Nor the fam'd Oaks*] The Oaks of this Place were ſaid to be endowed with a Voice and prophetic Spirit. The Prieſts, who gave Anſwers, concealing themſelves in thoſe Trees, a Practice, which the pious Frauds of ſucceeding Ages have rendered not improbable.

v. 681. Ammon *to them muſt yield*] This famous Oracle was ſituated in *Lybia*, between the greater and leſs *Catabathmus*, to the Weſt of *Egypt*, in what is now called the Deſert of *Barca*. For a farther and more particular Account, ſee *Lucan*'s *Pharſalia*, Book 9.

No more let *Apis* cheat his ſervile Train,
Nor *Branchus* honour'd with a *Lybian* Fane.
No more *Arcadia*'s trembling Swains adore
The Shades of *Pan*, or his Advice implore.
More ſkill'd is he, to whom propitious *Jove*
Declares his Will in Omens from above.
From whence, or when this Honour ſprung, is known
To thee, the ſole omniſcient Cauſe, alone:
Dark and obſcure its Origin remains,
And ſtill deludes the vain Enquirer's Pains.
But, whether Nature did this Taſk impoſe,
When at her Word the whole Creation roſe;
Whether, once Men, they trod ſome hoſtile Plain,
And in the Form of Birds reviv'd again;
Or their great Diſtance from the World below,
And purer Air this uſeful Art beſtow:

v. 683. *No more let* Apis] *Apis* was an *Egyptian* Deity, worſhipped in the Shape of a Bull.

v. 684. *Nor* Branchus] The common Report is, that *Branchus* was a *Theſſalian* Youth beloved by *Apollo*; in whoſe Honour the God commanded a Temple to be erected, and Sacrifices to be offered.

v. 685. *No more* Arcadia's] The divine Honours that were paid to *Pan* in *Arcadia*, are known to every one who is verſed in the Claſſics; nay, their Partiality was ſo great as to prefer him before all the other Deities. Hence *Virgil* ſays;

> Pan etiam, Arcadiâ mecum ſi judice certet,
> Pan etiam, Arcadiâ ſe victum judice dicat.
>
> Eclogue 5. Verſe 58.

v. 695. *Whether once Men*] The Doctrine of the *Metempſychoſis* was founded upon a Suppoſition, that the Souls of the Deceaſed paſſed from one Body to another. *Pythagoras* was Author of this Set of Philoſophers, affirming that his Soul entered into the Bodies of five different Animals; and that he was firſt *Euphorbus*, 2d *Pythagoras*, 3d A Peacock, 4th *Homer*, and 5th *Ennius* the *Roman* Poet.

May

May ſome unerring previous Signs declare
Our Fate and Fortune in the dubious War.
If captive *Thebes*, her Hoſt and Walls o'erthrown,
The lawful Heir, her rightful Lord ſhall own.
Let fav'ring Thunders ſhake the diſtant Spheres,
And Birds with Voice auſpicious ſtrike our Ears:
But, if the Gods averſe reject our Vows,
And the proud Tyrant's wrongful Cauſe eſpouſe,
Withhold thoſe Signs: And may the plumy Race
In num'rous Flocks obſcure th' aerial Space.
Thus ſpoke the Sage: And on the Rock reclin'd,
To the ſame Office other Gods aſſign'd.
From thence he views a gath'ring Miſt ariſe,
Raviſh the Day, and blacken all the Skies.
But when they had (by old Example taught)
Freſh Omens from the Stars and Æther ſought;
Melampus cries: No fav'ring Birds of Prey,
Nor tuneful Songſters wing their airy Way,
Float on the Wind, or emulouſly ſtrain
Their liquid Throats, and cleave th' etherial Plain.
No jetty Raven, from *Apollo* ſent,
Nor Owl from *Pallas* favours our Intent;
Nor dexter Eagle, ſtooping from above,
Proclaims our Int'reſt with his Maſter *Jove*.
Yet ſee, what Legions, gath'ring from afar
In Queſt of Prey, await the future War!

v. 703. *Let fav'ring Thunders*] The Heathens, among many other ſuperſtitious Notions, had this in particular; that Thunder coming from the Left portended the Favour of the Gods to thoſe who ſaw it. Hence *Virgil:*

Vix ea fatus erat ſenior, ſubitoque fragore
Intonuit lævum. Æneid, Lib. 2. Verſe 692.

Here quiv'ring Hawks, and hungry Vultures fly,
And cloud with ſpreading Wings th' obſtructed Sky.
There horrid Screech-Owls with portending Flight,
And Screamings dire prophane the hallow'd Light.
What then remains?—Shall theſe Portents prevail,
And Peace or War incline the doubtful Scale?
Canſt thou, O Source of Light, unmov'd, ſurvey
Thy Rays obſcur'd, and violated Day?
While thus he ſpake: A ſudden Tumult ſprings
From claſhing Talons, and obſtructed Wings:
They clap their Pinions, and with frantick Rage
Strike their own Breaſts, and with themſelves engage.
The Chief ſubjoins:—Oft have theſe Eyes beheld
Dire Omens, and my Skill the Cauſe reveal'd:
Yet never felt I this Exceſs of Fear,
Or did the Stars more ominous appear;
Not even when I ſought the *Colchian* Shore,
With Kings and Demi-gods in Days of Yore.
To what I urg'd they liſten'd and obey'd,
And Fate confirm'd whate'er *Melampus* ſaid:
Nor was the Son of *Phœbus* ſooner heard
Than I, or his Advice to mine preferr'd.
But ſee, ſtill greater Prodigies await,
And free from further Doubt the Will of Fate.

v. 727. *There horrid Screech-Owls*] The above-quoted Author ſays,

Solaque culminibus ferali carmine Bubo
Sæpe queri, et longas in fletum ducere voces.

Book 4. V. 462.

v. 747. *But ſee, ſtill greater Prodigies*] *Statius* has excelled his two poetical Predeceſſors *Homer* and *Virgil* in the Choice of an Omen, and in the Application of it to the Thing portended, in a very eminent Degree. By premiſing this Obſervation, I have unluckily awakened the Reader's Attention, and drawn myſelf into an indiſpenſible Neceſſity of giving my Opinion of this Part in general.

To

Unnumber'd Swans, collected from afar,
In one firm Body wedg'd, expect the War:
Whether ſtern *Boreas* hither urg'd their Courſe,
Or *Nile* o'erflows its Banks from ev'ry Source.
The *Thebans* theſe, who ſhun the deathful Field,
And hold their Walls before them as a Shield.
But ſee, exulting with the Hopes of Prey,
A Troop of Eagles hither wing their Way.
Theſe are th' *Inachian* Chiefs, who ſeek Renown
From captive *Thebes*, and threat the guilty Town.
With open Beaks, and levell'd Claws they ſpring,
And all the War deſcends upon the Wing.
Beneath each Blow a ſnowy Warrior dies,
And Show'rs of Blood and Feathers quit the Skies.
Yet ſee, the Victors triumph but to fall;
And *Jove* deſcends, alike ſevere to all.
This, proudly ſoaring thro' forbidden Ways,
Is burnt with ſcorching *Sol*'s avenging Rays.
That, daring with ſuperior Strength engage,
Falls the juſt Victim of united Rage.

To ſay any Thing of Augury, farther than it concerns the preſent Subject of our Obſervation, would be entirely needleſs, as the Reader may find it deſcribed at large in *Kennet* and *Potter*. I ſhall only remark therefore, that out of a very dry Subject, *Statius* has made an entertaining and agreeable Narration. The different Deaths of the ſix Heroes combined againſt *Thebes*, are finely imagined in thoſe of the ſix Eagles. But, as the Propriety of the Application cannot be ſo well illuſtrated without a previous Compariſon, I ſhall defer doing it till it occurs in the Courſe of Obſervation. The Omen deſcribed by *Virgil* is in the 11th Book of the Æneid; and that of *Homer* in the 12th of the Iliad.

v. 765. *This, proudly ſoaring*] This was *Capaneus*, who was thunder-ſtruck for attempting to ſcale the Walls of *Thebes*, in Defiance of *Jupiter*.

v. 767. *That, daring with ſuperior Strength*] The Hero here figured was *Parthenopæus*, who fell in a Duel with *Dryas*, a Chief of enormous Size, and diſtinguiſhed Strength.

Here one, entangled with his Foe, expires:
This, ſafe in Flight alone, from War retires.
Another Chief, o'erwhelm'd with Numbers, lies,
And with his ſprinkled Blood pollutes the Skies.
This, tho' he ſcarce retains the vital Breath,
Preys on his Foe, and triumphs, e'en in Death.
But whence thoſe ſecret Tears, that ſtifled Groan?
Too well, alas! the fatal Cauſe is known:
Thus ſhook the trembling Chiefs beneath the Weight
Of imag'd Miſchiefs, and portended Fate.
Great was their Grief while yet it lay conceal'd,
But greater when their Fortune was reveal'd.

v. 769. *Here one, entangled*] This was *Polynices*, who fell encountering with his Brother.

v. 770. *This ſafe in Flight*] *Adraſtus* is alluded to here, who returned ſafe home to *Argos*.

v. 771. *Another Chief, o'erwhelm'd*] *Hippomedon* was drowned in the River *Iſmenus*, in the Purſuit of his Enemies.

v. 773. *This, tho' he ſcarce retains*] The Poet here alludes to *Tydeus*, who, in the very Pangs of Death is repreſented as gnawing the Head of his Enemy.

v. 775. *But whence thoſe ſecret Tears*] This is the moſt beautiful Stroke in the pathetic Way that I ever met with in the Courſe of my Reading. When *Melampus*, who had been deſcribing the different Fates of the ſeven Heroes from thoſe of the ſeven Eagles, had come to that of *Amphiaraus*, then preſent, inſtead of purſuing the Application, he burſt into Tears. His Friend obſerved him, and being conſcious of the Cauſe, chides him for endeavouring to hide it. I muſt own I was very anxious, and unable to gueſs how the Poet would extricate himſelf from this Embarraſſment; but was agreeable ſurprized to find, that he had not only cleared himſelf with Reputation, but made it one of the moſt beautiful Paſſages in the whole Work. This alone might be a Confutation of that falſe Criticiſm which ſome have fallen into, who affirm, that a Poet ought only to connect the great and noble Particulars in his Paintings. But it is in the Images of Things, as in the Characters of Perſons; where a ſmall Action, or even a ſmall Circumſtance of an Action, lets us more into the Knowledge and Comprehenſion of them,

From whence, ye Gods! does this Impatience grow
Of prying into what we fear to know?
Since Preſcience doubles future Miſeries,
Till ſmall Ills ſwell to a gigantic Size.
We deem as certain what's a doubtful Doom,
And feel th' Effects before the Cauſe is come;
To learn, perhaps, how many Years remain
Of Life, or what the Fates and *Jove* ordain.
Nor are theſe Seeds of Grief and Sorrow known
From *Phœbe*, Fibres, Birds, or Stars alone:
But Myſteries of Magic are explor'd,
And breathleſs Carcaſes to Life reſtor'd.
Yet were theſe Arts unknown in Days of old,
When Time was ſeen to fly on Wings of Gold.
The Gods reſerv'd them for this impious Age,
When Conſcience threatens their impending Rage.
Our virtuous Sires confin'd their harmleſs Toil
To thin the Woods or break the ſtubborn Soil.
The Depths of Fate involv'd in Errors lie,
Impervious, and remote from mortal Eye:

them, than the material Parts themſelves. *Plutarch* has ſufficiently proved this, in his Apology for relating the Anecdote of *Ageſilaus*'s riding upon a long Pole to pleaſe his Children. Nor is this found in a Hiſtory only, but in a Picture likewiſe; where ſometimes a ſmall Motion or Turn of a Finger will expreſs the Character and Action of the Figure more than all the other Parts of the Deſign.

v. 781. *From whence, ye Gods?*] It has been obſerved by ſome Critics, that theſe Philoſophical Enquiries and Moral Reflections are very un-epic, and allowable only in Dramatic Poetry. The Authors of this Obſervation have Reaſon on their Side, and I am glad *Statius* is ſo ſeldom blameable on this Head. *Lucan* is continually ſplitting upon this Rock; but he is more excuſable than an Epic Poet, ſince the chief Objection made to it is, that it breaks off the Connection requiſite in the Epopœia, and retards the Cataſtrophe or Solution of the Epic Knot.

Thoſe

Thoſe only, who have forfeited his Love,
Explore the Counſels of Almighty *Jove*.
Hence Falſhood, Diſcontent, and impious Rage,
Hence ev'ry Vice that ſtains the preſent Age.
Meanwhile *Oeclides* from his Temple rends
The ſacred Crown, and from the Mount deſcends:
He hears the clanging Trumpets from afar,
And all the Tumult of approaching War.
Nor, when he reach'd the Town, did he reſort
Among the Croud, or mingle with the Court;
But, lurking in a darkſome, lonely Cell,
Suppreſs'd in Silence what he fear'd to tell.
Melampus Shame and private Cares detain
Where *Pan* and *Ceres* ſhare an equal Reign.
Twelve Days he loiter'd on the woody Coaſt,
Then told the imag'd Fate of either Hoſt.
The God of Battles, eager to perform
His Sire's Commands, and raiſe the bloody Storm,
Depopulates the Towns, explores the Plains,
And from their Toils diverts the willing Swains.
Headlong they ruſh, impatient for the Fray,
Nor pleading Nature gains a ſhort Delay;
Nor weeping Wives their Huſbands could withhold,
Such was the Love of War, and *Theban* Gold.
No more their Halls, bereft of hoſtile Spoils,
Bear Witneſs of their Sire's victorious Toils.

v. 825. *No more their Halls*] The Reader may be willing, perhaps, to compare this with the following Paſſage of *Virgil*.

Ardet inexcita Auſonia atque immobilis ante.
Pars, leves clypeos et ſpicula lucida tergunt.
Arvina pingui, ſubiguntque in cote ſecures;
Tegmina tuta cavant capitum, nectuntque ſalignas
Umbonum crates. Alii thoracas ahenos,

Aut

E'en, unconſenting, *Jove* himſelf reſigns
The Chariots that adorn'd his awful Shrines.
They ſcour the ruſty Javelin, Form impart
To mutilated Swords, and point the Dart.
Some grace with Adamant their glowing Breaſts,
Or fit their brighten'd Helms with waving Creſts;
While others bend with Care the *Cretan* Bow,
And train their Steeds to charge or ſhun the Foe.
Inverted Ploughs, and Scythes new-temper'd wear
Another Form, and with freſh Luſtre glare.
For Spears each ſacred Grove its Branches yields,
And Oxen bleed to cloathe the burniſh'd Shields.
They deluge *Argos*, and in Crouds reſort
To force their Monarch, and inſult the Court.
War is their Wiſh, and Arms the gen'ral Cry;
Arms in Return the vaulted Roofs reply.
Loud as the Surge, or bellowing *Ætna* roars,
When the ſtern Giant ſhakes the neighb'ring Shores;
A burning Deluge iſſues from above,
And hurls its Anger on the Courts of *Jove*.

Aut leves ocreas lento ducunt argento.
Vomeris huc et falcis honos, huc omnis aratri
Ceſſit amor: Recoquunt patrios fornacibus enſes:
Æn. 7. V. 632.

And with this of *Lucan:*

Rupta quies populi, ſtratiſque excita juventus
Diripiunt ſacris affixa penatibus arma,
Quæ pax longa dabat, nudâ jam crate fluentes
Invadunt clypeos, curvataque cuſpide pila,
Et ſcabros nigræ morſu rubiginis enſes. Pharſ. Lib. 1.

v. 843. *Loud as the Surge*] The above quoted Author has made Uſe of this Compariſon.

Non ſic Ætneis habitans in vallibus horret
Enceladus ſpirante noto, cum tota cavernas
Egerit, et torrens in campos defluit Ætna. Lib. 6.

The

The Swain with Horror eyes the leſs'ning Main,
And the cleft Mountain ſeems to join again.
But *Capaneus*, the vaunted Pride of *Greece*,
Sighs for Revenge, and loaths the ſhort-liv'd Peace.
Such was the Stature, *Jove*'s enormous Foes,
Nor *Ætna*'s Sons in Height ſuperior roſe:
And ſuch his Might, the Splendors of his Birth
Were darkned by his own intrinſic Worth.
Yet he contemn'd the Gods, nor knew to ſtay,
Where Vengeance or Ambition led the Way;
But, prodigal of Life, whene'er withſtood,
Oft gave his own to ſpill another's Blood.
Before the Prophet's Gate, amidſt a Croud
Of mingled Ranks, he thus exclaims aloud.
Say, ye bold Candidates for warlike Praiſe,
From whence theſe abject Fears, and vain Delays?
What Joy to boaſting *Thebes*! What laſting Shame,
That *Argos*, heedleſs of her former Fame,
Dares not thro' pious Awe unſheath the Sword,
Till juggling Prieſts and Prophets give the Word!

v. 849. *But* Capaneus] The Character of *Capaneus* is poetically good, and makes a conſiderable Figure in the Thebaid. But if we look upon it in a moral Light: We ſhall find it an Aſſemblage of the brighteſt Virtues and blackeſt Vices; and they are both ſo blended together, that we can neither praiſe or diſapprove either, without an Oppoſition from the contrary Quality. He has Valour in a great Degree, but it is intermixed with Raſhneſs. His Conſtancy renders him impious and his Friendſhip, barbarous. In ſhort, this Character is built on the ſame Plan, as the Mezentius of Virgil, and Argante of Taſſo: Yet he has more Courage than the former, and more Impiety than the latter of theſe Heroes.

v. 857. *But prodigal of Life*] *Taſſo* makes the ſame Obſervation of *Argante*.

E la vendetta ſor tanto diſia.
Che ſprezza i riſchi, e le diſeſe oblia. Canto 6. St. 45.

Should

Should *Sol* himſelf, whom heartleſs Slaves adore,
And Fame reports a God, exhauſt his Store
Of Prodigies, and ſcare our *Argive* Train;
By all deſerted, would I ſeek the Plain.
This Arm and Weapon Aid alone afford;
Theſe are the Gods by *Capaneus* ador'd.
But ſhould this Daſtard Seer refuſe to join
In Combat; nor his fraudful Arts reſign;
My Javelin can revenge ſo baſe a Part,
And free the Soul that quivers in his Heart.
Shouts of Acclaim the lift'ning Vulgar raiſe,
And Voice to Voice reſounds the Warrior's Praiſe.
At length *Amphiaraus* his Silence broke,
And, ruſhing from his Cavern, thus he ſpoke.
From whence theſe Vaunts, this impious Waſte of Breath?
'Tis not from mortal Arms I fear my Death:
Nor ſought I ſhelter here from deſtin'd Fight,
Nor did thy Threats reſtore me to the Light.
Another Fate o'erhangs my guiltleſs head,
And *Jove* ſhall rank me with the num'rous Dead.
Inſpiring *Phœbus*, and a Patriot's Cares
Have urg'd me to reveal what Fate prepares.
Hear then, nor let in vain the God diſcloſe;
But learn, adviſ'd, to ſhun impending Woes.
From thee, alone, the ſlighted God withholds
His Oracles, nor haſt'ning Fate unfolds.

v. 871. *This Arm and Weapon*] This is copied from the blaſphemous Invocation of *Mezentius*.

Dextra mihi Deus et telum quod miſſile libro
Nunc adſint.——

[Æneid. Lib. 10. Verſe 773.

But

But ſay, by what malicious Furies driv'n,
You take up Arms, as in Contempt of Heav'n?
Is Life inſipid, *Argos* hateful grown,
And *Mars* of all the Gods ador'd alone?
Can Home no more attractive Joys afford,
And ſhall theſe Omens be in vain explor'd?
Ah! what avails it to have read the Skies,
And watch'd the Courſe of ev'ry Bird that flies?
Far better had the kindly God conceal'd
The fatal Horrors of the *Theban* Field.
Ye ſacred Myſteries deriv'd from *Jove!*
Ye wing'd Inhabitants of Heav'n above!
And thou, whoſe guiding Influence I feel,
Be witneſs to the Truths I now reveal!
In the blue Vault, as in a Volume ſpread,
Plain might the *Argive* Deſtiny be read.
The weary Siſters flag, and ſcarcely wield
The fatal Sheers, ſuch Carnage hides the Field.
Diſmiſs your Arms, reſign your impious Rage,
Nor raſhly thus, with Fates averſe, engage.
May Fibres err, and Omens threat in vain;
Nor *Argive* Blood enrich the *Theban* Plain.
But let us go:—Our Ruin is decreed,
And *Thebes* and *Argos* fatally muſt bleed.
Thus far the Chief: a riſing Groan ſuppreſt,
And in eternal Darkneſs veil'd the reſt.
When *Capaneus*.—Fly, Son of *Oecleus*, fly,
Thy Aid we need not, and thy Threats defy:

v. 919. *When* Capaneus] This Speech of *Capaneus* has a great deal of Spirit, Humour and Sarcaſm; and lets us more into the Character of its Author, than any hitherto has done He is a Perſon that cannot hearken to Reaſon, unleſs agreeable to his own Inclinations;

Secure thyſelf in Flight; nor here ſuggeſt
Fears like thy own to ev'ry Soldier's Breaſt.
May Birds and Fibres ſtill thy Care employ,
And Eaſe and homely Pleaſures be thy Joy.
Yet unreveng'd ſhall valiant *Tydeus* bleed,
And *Thebes* in Peace applaud the guilty Deed?
Do thou aſſert the Royal Exile's Cauſe,
And prove the Force of hoſpitable Laws.
Thoſe Enſigns of *Apollo* will retard
Each hoſtile Stroke, and claim a due Regard.
Does Nature, ſubjected to Magic Laws,
Diſcloſe to Light each dark, myſterious Cauſe?
How eaſy are your Gods, if Pray'rs can move,
And gain Admiſſion to the Courts of *Jove!*
Fear made them firſt: But whence this fond Delight
To ſcatter Terrors, and retard the Fight?
Hence while thou may'ſt; nor, when the Morning's Beam
Shall ſtrike upon our Arms at *Dirce*'s Stream,
Preſume our Rage, and Thirſt of War to ſtay;
Remember this our Counſel, and obey:
Leſt *Phœbus* mourn his helpleſs Prophet ſlain,
And Enſigns ſcatter'd on the *Theban* Plain.
There *Capaneus* ſhall act an Augur's Part,
And rage amidſt his Foes with lifted Dart.
Again loud Peals of Acclamation riſe
From ev'ry Mouth, and thunder to the Skies.

nations; and his Prejudice carries him ſo far as to make him laugh at the nobleſt Arts, and even the Gods themſelves, only becauſe they are Obſtructions to his Deſire of waging War with *Thebes*. The Effects of his Oration are ſuch as we may ſee every Day in common Life; where the Aggreſſor frequently has the Laugh, though his Antagoniſt has perhaps Reaſon on his Side.

As when a Torrent ſwoln with vernal Rains,
And melting Snows invades the ſubject Plains,
Thro' ruin'd Moles the Victor-Wave reſounds,
O'erwhelms the Bridge, and burſts the lofty Mounds;
Cots, Herds, and trembling Swains are borne away,
And hurried on with unreſiſted Sway;
Till, bounded by ſome Hill, it ſhifts its Courſe,
And, ruſhing backward, ſeeks its diſtant Source.

v. 947. *As when a Torrent*] It is doubtful whether this Compariſon is to be applied to the Noiſe of the ſhouting *Argives*, or to the cloſing of the Diſpute by the Interpoſition of Night; as the Poet might ſay with equal Propriety, that the Shouts of the Army were as loud as the Noiſe of a ruſhing Torrent; or that Night cloſed the Debate in the ſame Mannar as an Eminence ſtops the Courſe of an Inundation. The Reader therefore muſt pleaſe his own Fancy, and apply it where he thinks it moſt applicable. I believe it will not be diſagreeable to ſee how other Poets have acquitted themſelves on this Subject. The Reader may judge between them.

Ὡστε γαρ αμπιδιον ποταμω πληθοντι ἐοικως
Χειμερῳ, ὃς τ' ωκα ῥεων επεδωσει γεφυρας·
Τοῦ δ' ουτ' αρ τε γεφυραι ἐεργμεναι ἐρχαιουσιν,
Ουτ' αρα ἑρκεα ἰσχει ἀλωαων ἠριθηλεων,
Ελθοντ' ἐξαπινης ὁτε ἐπρησεν Διος ομβρος,
Πολλα δ' ὑπ' αυτου ἐργα κατηρικε καλ' αἰζηων. Iliad. Lib. 5.

Non ſic aggeribus ruptis cum ſpumeus amnis
Exiit, oppoſitaſque evicit gurgite moles,
Fertur in arva furens cumulo, campoſque per omnes
Cum ſtabulis armenta trahit. —— Æneid. Lib. 2.

Sic pleno Padus ore tumens ſuper aggere tutas
Excurrit ripas, et totos concutit agros.
Succubuit ſi qua tellus, cumulumque furentem
Undarum paſſura ruit: tum flumine toto
Tranſit, et ignotos aperit ſibi gurgite campos.
Illos terra fugit dominos: his rura colonis
Accedunt, donante Pado.—— *Lucan* Phar. B. 2. V. 476.

They are all four extremely beautiful, and have their Admirers, and, unleſs I err very much in Point of Judgment, they do not appear here to the Diſadvantage of *Statius*.

Meanwhile

Mean while the Sun to Weſtern Deeps retir'd,
And with his Light the ſtern Debate expir'd.
But fair *Argia*, ſteep'd in Sorrow, ſhares
A more than half of all her Huſband's Cares.
Impatient to divulge her Grief, ſhe roſe,
And ſought the Royal Manſions of Repoſe.
Abandon'd to the Wind her Treſſes fly;
Grief pal'd her Cheeks, and dull'd her ſparkling Eye.
Theſſander in her ſoft Embraces preſs'd,
(Her only Hope) hung ſmiling at her Breaſt.
What Time the Bear, of all the ſtarry Train
Alone ſurviving, ſhuns the Weſtern Main,
She reach'd her Sire, and on his Kneees reclin'd,
Thus vents the ſecret Purpoſe of her Mind.
Of what Avail are Words to you, who know
The Source and Origin of all my Woe?
Say, is it doubted, why I bend my Courſe
To you, my Sire, my Friend, my ſole Reſource?
Yet Heav'n atteſt, the ſilent Lamp of Night,
And Stars alone were conſcious of my Flight.
Alas! nor Eaſe, nor Quiet have I known,
(But ſhar'd in Grief and Sorrows not my own,)
Since *Hymen*'s Tapers ſhone at your Command,
And this young Prince receiv'd my plighted Hand.

v. 965. *What time the Bear*, &c.] *Statius* is guilty of the ſame Aſtronomical Miſtake, as his two Predeceſſors *Homer* and *Virgil*; who both in their Verſes repreſent the Bear as the only Conſtellation which never bathed itſelf in the Ocean, that is to ſay, that did not ſet, and was always viſible; whereas this is common to other Conſtellations of the Arctic Circle; as, the leſſer Bear, the Dragon, the greateſt Part of Cepheus, &c. For my Part I eſteem this Miſtake of ſo little Conſequence in a Poet, that I ſhall not trouble the Reader with a Vindication, but refer him to that of *Homer*, by Mr. *Pope*. See Note on Verſe 566 of the 18th Book of the Iliad.

Pangs keen as thoſe which break my nightly Reſt,
Might pierce a Rock, or Tyger's ruthleſs Breaſt.
Now on the Verge of endleſs Woe I ſtand,
And own no Help but from thy ſaving Hand:
Aſſent to War, nor let thy Son bemoan
The raviſh'd Empire due to him alone.
But, if theſe Tears thy Pity fail to move,
Regard this Infant-Pledge of mutual Love.
How will his Foes deride his lowly Birth,
And make his Woes the Object of their Mirth!
Yet was his Sire the Prince, who (*Phœbus* ſaid)
Should ſhare thy Scepter, and *Argia*'s Bed.
Nor was I led aſtray by Love's Delights,
Or lawleſs *Hymen* preſent at the Rites;
But mindful e'er of what thou didſt enjoin,
I taught my Heart to know no Choice but thine.
Say, can I freeze, when he for Vengeance glows,
Or wiſh to ſmile, exempt from ſocial Woes?
The Fears and Cares of Love, alas! are known
To thoſe, whom Fortune dooms to feel, alone.
Yet ſuch the Object of this harſh Requeſt,
I dread the Grant, and what I aſk, deteſt;

v. 987. *How will his Foes*] As being the Son of an Exile.

The Poet in this Oration does not ſeem to have thoroughly entered into the Spirit of the Cauſe, or kept the Motives to this Addreſs ſufficiently in his Eye: At leaſt I ſhould have been inclined to have put another Conſtruction on it, and to have concluded it rather the Effect of Pride and Ambition, than of Diſintereſtedneſs and Humanity, if I had not recollected that *Argia* was put to Death by *Creon*, for burying her Huſband contrary to Orders. The Motives ſhe alledges ſeem to be a meer Feint; and indeed it is improbable that a tender Wife and affectionate Daughter ſhould deſire her Huſband and Father to hazard their Lives for a petty Sovereignty, when the former of theſe Relations was Heir to a much larger, as *Polynices* was to *Adraſtus*.

And

And, when the Trumpet ſounds the laſt Adieu,
And the dear Object leſſens to my View;
I yet may wiſh, but then muſt wiſh in vain,
The circling Moments could revolve again.
The Monarch, riſing, on her Cheeks impreſt
A tender Kiſs, and thus the Fair addreſt.
Diſmiſs thy Fears: E'en Envy muſt approve
Thy juſt Petition, and Exceſs of Love
The threat'ning Gods my lab'ring Breaſt divide,
And bid each Impulſe of Revenge ſubſide.
Yet fair *Argia* ſhall not ſue in vain,
Nor her brave Spouſe without Redreſs complain.
Be this his Solace, that this ſhort Delay
Tends to ſecure the Fortune of the Fray.
The pauſing Monarch from his Couch aroſe,
And quits the ſilent Manſions of Repoſe;
For now *Aurora*, clad in Eaſtern Spoils,
Renews at once the Light, and mortal Toils.

End of Book III.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

ADRASTUS *having given his Conſent to the War, the Allied Army is drawn up in Form of Battle. They begin their March to* Thebes. Eriphyle, *by the Acceptance of a Preſent from* Argia, *lays her Huſband under an Obligation of joining the Confederates.* Parthenopæus *elopes during his Mother's Abſence, and heads the* Arcadian *Troops. She follows him, but to no Effect. The Prieſteſs of* Bacchus, *inſpired with a Spirit of Divination, runs up and down the City, and foretells the Death of the two* Theban *Princes, with the Uſurpation of the Kingdom by* Creon. *Several Prodigies happen. At length,* Eteocles, *alarm'd at the Invaſion of his Territories, conſults with* Tireſias *the Prophet, concerning the Fate of the War. They go through a Courſe of Necromancy, and conjure up the Spirit of* Laius, *whoſe ambiguous Anſwer determines them to oppoſe the Invaders in a hoſtile Manner.* Bacchus *in his Return from* Thrace, *meets the* Argives *in their Route to* Thebes. *He leads them out of their Way, and perſuades the Nymphs to dry up all the Rivers and Fountains under their Care. The Allies, half dead with Thirſt, are met by a* Lemnian *Princeſs, who informs them of the River* Langia *and conducts them thither. They offer up a Prayer to the tutelar Genius of the River, which concludes the Book.*

THE THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THRICE had *Hyperion* either Tropic view'd,
The Winter baniſh'd, and the Spring renew'd;
When now the ſprightly Trumpet from afar
Gave the dread Signal of approaching War.
When fierce *Bellona*, ſent by *Jove*'s Command,
(The Torch of Diſcord blazing in her Hand)
Bar'd her red Arm from fair *Lariſſa*'s Height,
And whirl'd her Spear, a Prelude to the Fight.
Whizzing it cleaves the Skies: near *Dirce*'s Source
A riſing Hillock bounds its furious Courſe,
Thence to the glitt'ring Camp the Goddeſs flies,
And darts from Rank to Rank her ardent Eyes:
She ſtrokes the Steeds, and arms the Warrior's Hands,
The truly Brave prevent her ſtern Commands,
And e'en the Coward loaths the Thought of Flight,
And feels a ſhort liv'd Ardor for the Fight.
The deſtin'd Day ſerenely ſhone above,
And firſt a Victim falls to *Mars* and *Jove*.
The trembling Prieſt a chearful Aſpect wears,
Nor to th' enquiring Troops imparts his Fears.

The Poet has exerted himſelf in a very eminent Degree at the Opening of this Book. He awakens the Reader's Curioſity, and ſounds an Alarm to the approaching Conflict. The Influence of Diſcord over the brave Man and the Coward is finely diſtinguiſhed, and contributes to heighten the Majeſty of this Deſcription.

Mean while their Friends indulge a parting View,
And preſs around to ſhare the laſt Adieu.
No Bounds the guſhing Stream of Sorrow knows;
From Rank to Rank the ſoft Contagion grows:
Each pregnant Eye unwonted Currents pours,
Their Bucklers intercept the falling Show'rs.
Some through their Helms a fervent Kiſs impart,
And Nature triumphs o'er each ſoften'd Heart.
No more the Thirſt of War and Vengeance burns,
But exil'd Tenderneſs in all returns.
Thus when, the Storm appeas'd, a riſing Breeze
Invites the Mariner to tempt the Seas,
Their weeping Friends the parting Crew detain,
And for a while ſubſides the Love of Gain.
With ſtreaming Eyes, and Hand faſt lock'd in Hand,
They put off Fate, and linger on the Strand.
But, when the Veſſel cleaves the yielding Deep,
The Mourners poſted on ſome neighb'ring Steep,
With eager Eyes purſue the leſs'ning Sails,
And curſe the driving Impulſe of the Gales.
Aſſiſt, O Fame, in whoſe immortal Page
The glorious Toils of ev'ry diſtant Age

v. 41. *Aſſiſt, O Fame*] It is hard to conceive any Addreſs more ſolemn, any Opening to a Subject more noble and magnificent than this Invocation. The Hint of it is taken from *Homer*, though the Invocation itſelf is varied, as may be ſeen from comparing them together.

Ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι·
(Ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε, πάρεστέ τε, ἴστέ τε πάντα,
Ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν.)
Οἵτινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν, καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν.
Πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι, οὐδ' ὀνομήνω,
Οὐδ' εἰ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,
Φωνὴ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη,

Recorded ſhine; to whoſe all-ſeeing Eyes
Nor Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell impervious lies.
And thou, *Calliope*, deriv'd from *Jove*,
Whoſe Muſic warbles in th' *Aonian* Grove,
From whom alone heroic Ardor ſprings,
Be preſent, and awake the trembling Strings:
Relate, what Chiefs, in queſt of warlike Fame,
And fir'd by *Mars*, to aid *Adraſtus* came.
Surcharg'd with Troubles, and a Length of Years,
Encircled by his Hoſt, the King appears.
A Sword alone for Ornament he wore,
His Slaves behind the pond'rous Armor bore.
Beneath the Gate his fiery Courſers ſtand;
And, while the Groom divides with artful Hand
His flowing Mane, reluctant to the Car
Arion bounds, and hopes the promis'd War.

Εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες μῶσαι, Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
Θυγατέρες, μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον.

Virgil has imitated it, but with little Succeſs.

Pandite nunc Helicona, Deæ, cantuſque movete:
Qui bello exciti reges: quæ quemque ſecutæ
Complerint campos acies; quibus Itala jam tum
Floruerit terra alma viris, quibus arſerit armis.
Et meminiſtis enim, Divæ, et memorare poteſtis:
Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura. Æn. 7. V. 64.

And *Taſſo* with ſome Improvement.

Mente de gli anni, e del' oblio nemica,
Delle coſe cuſtode, e diſpenſiera,
Vaglia mi tua ragion sì, ch'io ridica
Di quel Campo ogni Duce, ed ogni ſchiera.
Suoni, e riſplenda la lor fama antica,
Fatta dagli anni omai tacita, e nera:
Tolto da' tuoi tefori orni mia lingua
Cio, ch' aſcolti ogni età, nulla l'eſtingua. G. C. 1. St. 36.

For him *Lariſſa* arms her martial Pow'rs,
And fair *Proſymna* grac'd with riſing Tow'rs.
To theſe the Youth of *Midea* ſucceed,
And *Phyllos*, famous for her fleecy Breed;
Then fair *Cleone* ſends a valiant Train,
And lowly *Neris*, o'er whoſe fertile Plain
The ſwift *Charadros* rolls his rapid Flood,
And *Thyre*, doom'd to float in *Spartan* Blood.
From *Drepanos*, for ſhowy Cliffs renown'd,
And *Sicyon*, with Groves of Olives crown'd,
A Troop of grateful Warriors bend their Way,
Where once *Adraſtus* held the regal Sway,
Where ſlow *Langia* bathes the ſilent Shores,
And, winding in his Courſe, *Eliſſos* roars.
Here oft repair from *Pluto*'s gloomy Courts
The Siſter-Furies (ancient Fame reports)
While, bending o'er the Brink, the Serpents ſlake
Their Thirſt, and of the grateful Stream partake.

v. 59 *For him* Lariſſa, *&c.*] I think myſelf obliged to make a few Obſervations on the Nature of Catalogues, as they have been objected to by ſome Literati, who have delivered their Critical Remarks to the World with ſome Succeſs. To conſider it then as purely poetical (for this is all that merits our Notice) we may obſerve firſt, what an Air of Probability is ſpread over the whole Poem, by the particulariſing of every Nation concerned in this War. Secondly, what an entertaining Scene is prefented to us, of ſo many Countries drawn in their natural Colours, while we wander along with the Poet amidſt a beautiful Variety of Towns, Havens, Foreſts, Groves, Mountains, and Rivers; and are perpetually amuſed with his Obſervations on the different Soils, Products, Situations, Proſpects, or with hiſtorical Anecdotes, relative to the Country, Army, or their Commanders. And laſty, there has been ſcarce any Epic Writer, but has drawn up one, which is at leaſt a Proof how beautiful it has been eſteemed by the greateſt Geniuſes in all Ages. *Homer* gave the Hint, and was followed by *Virgil*, *Statius*, *Taſſo*, *Spencer*, and *Milton*.

But,

But, whether theſe o'erturn'd the *Theban* State,
Or at *Mycenæ* kindled ſtern Debate,
Eliſſos flies from the deteſted Brood,
Such Venom ſtains the Surface of his Flood.
From *Ephyre* a Tide of Warriors flows,
Who kindly bore a Part in *Ino*'s Woes,
Where to the Hoofs of the *Gorgonean* Horſe
A ſpringing Fountain owes its myſtic Source.
And the firm Iſthmus hears on either Side
The diff'rent Murmurs of the ruſhing Tide.
From hence attend *Adraſtus* to the Fray
Three Thouſand Warriors rang'd in bright Array.
From diſtant Lands they fought the Field of Fame,
Varying in Manners, Origin and Name.
Some knotty Clubs, in Fire attemper'd, bear,
While ſome diſmiſs the quiv'ring Lance in Air.
Theſe ply the ſounding Sling with fatal Art,
And rival e'en the *Parthian*'s venom'd Dart.
Amid the Throng *Adraſtus* takes his Way,
Rever'd for Age, but more for gentle Sway.
Thus ſome old Bull, the Monarch of the Meads,
His ſubject Herd around the Paſture leads.

v. 83. *Where to the Hoofs*] The Fountain *Hippocrene* is reported to have ſprung from a Stroke of *Pegaſus*'s Hoofs, as the Etymology of the Word ſufficiently demonſtrates; ἵππος ſignifying a Horſe, and Κρήνη, a Fountain.

v. 97. *Thus ſome old Bull*] This fine Simile brings to my Mind an equally fine one of *Lucan*, where he compares *Pompey* to an old Oak: the Application is obviouſly the ſame as this, though the Compariſon itſelf is not taken from the ſame Object.

Qualis frugifero quercus ſublimis in agro
Exuvias veteres populi, ſacrataque geſtans
Dona ducum: nec jam validis radicibus hærens,
Pondere fixa ſuo eſt: nudoſque per aëra ramos

Effundens

Though ſpent with Age, and long diſus'd to Fight,
His Reign depends on antiquated Might,
The youthful Steers, without Reluctance, yield
Their Share of Sway, nor dare diſpute the Field:
Such Furrows on his Breaſt, and graceful Scars
Appear, the Monuments of former Wars.
The *Theban* Hero, full of youthful Fire,
Rode in the Rank, and next his aged Sire.
Beneath his Standard rang'd, a valiant Band
From fair *Bæotia* threat their native Land.
Some, ſtill impreſs'd with Sentiments of Love,
And Loyalty, to fight his Battles move;
While others prone to change, and to repine,
In queſt of Novelty, his Army join.
Yet more—Three wealthy Cities own his Sway,
And, from the Father's Gift, the Son obey;
Whoſe Youths embodied might increaſe his Hoſt,
And be ſome Solace for his Empire loſt.
Such was his Habit, and the ſame his Arms,
As when he firſt beheld *Argia*'s Charms.
A Lion's Spoils acroſs his Back he wore,
And in his Hand two beamy Javelins bore.
The Sphinx, pourtray'd, his deathful Falchion grac'd,
A golden Sheath the ſhining Blade encas'd.
His Mother, Siſters, all that once were dear,
Ruſh to his Thoughts, and force a tender Tear.
In Proſpect he ſurveys the Reign his own,
And ſwells on an imaginary Throne.

Effundens, trunco, non frondibus efficit umbram:
At quamvis primo nutet caſura ſub Euro,
Tot circum ſilvæ firmo ſe robore tollunt,
Sola tamen colitur.—— *Pharſal.* Book 1.

Mean

Mean while, *Argia* from a neighb'ring Tow'r,
Recalls his Eyes from viſionary Pow'r;
The dearer Object ſcorns an equal Part
With *Thebes*, and claims an undivided Heart.
Next joyful *Tydeus* joins the marching Hoſt
With Troops collected on *Ætolia*'s Coaſt.
The Trumpet ſounds: he trembles with Delight,
And pants, and ſtarts, impatient for the Fight.
So ſhines, renew'd in youthful Pride, the Snake,
When Spring recalls him from the thorny Brake,
He views with Scorn the vain Attacks of Age,
And glows, and ſtiffens with collected Rage.
Now riſing on his Spires he braves the Day,
And glitters with the Sun's reflected Ray;
Or, by the fatal Aid of kindred Green,
Amidſt the graſſy Verdure lurks unſeen.
Hapleſs the Swain! whom near him Fortune draws,
When flaming Thirſt dilates his venom'd Jaws.
Pylene's Warriors in his Cauſe engage,
And *Pleuron*, conſcious of *Althæa*'s Rage;
They pour from *Caledon*'s impending Steep,
From *Chalcis*, beaten by the rolling Deep,

v. 135. *So ſhines renew'd*] This is taken from *Virgil*'s Æneid, Book 2.

> Qualis ubi in lucem coluber, mala gramina paſtus,
> Frigida ſub terrâ tumidum quem bruma tegebat,
> Nunc poſitis novus exuviis, nitiduſque juventâ,
> Lubrica convolvit ſublato pectore terga
> Arduus ad ſolem, et linguis micat ore triſulcis.

I think *Statius* (as every Imitator ſhould do) has improved on his Original. His Language is more elevated than *Virgil*'s, and he has manifeſtly the Advantage in inſerting the two laſt Lines, as they reflect the higheſt Honour on *Tydeus*.

And *Olenos* which boaſts the Birth of *Jove*,
Nor yields in Fame to *Cretan Ida*'s Grove.
From *Achelous* ſome direct their Courſe,
A Stream ſtill mindful of *Herculean* Force.
No more, emerging from his pearly Bed,
Above th' encircling Waves he rears his Head,
But, lurking in his azure Caves, deplores
His duſty Margin and exhauſted Shores.
A Troop, ſelected for his Guard, ſurrounds
The Chief, diſtain'd with honourable Wounds.
They twine young Sallows to ſupport the Shield,
And in each Hand a pointed Javelin wield.
Mars, imag'd on their glitt'ring Helms, inſpires
Unwearied Rage and unextinguiſh'd Fires.
Such was the *Theban*'s, ſuch th' *Ætolian*'s Rage,
Twas doubtful in whoſe Cauſe the Chiefs engage,
Beneath a Youth, as yet unknown to Fame,
The *Doric* Troops, a num'rous Army, came,
With thoſe, who labour where *Lyrceus* leads
His copious Stream along the fertile Meads;

v. 151. *From* Achelous] *Achelous* contended with *Hercules* for the Nymph *Dejanira*; and being overcome in a Duel, was transformed into a River.

v. 163. *Such was the Theban's*] It is very obſervable how *Tydeus* riſes in the Reader's Eſteem, as the Poem advances: It opens with many Circumſtances very much to the Diſadvantage of his Character; eſpecially the Conflict between him and *Polynices*: but in the ſecond Book we find him undertaking an Embaſſy to *Thebes*, and endangering his Life in his Rival's Cauſe: In the third Book he returns covered with Wounds, and yet is willing to hazard himſelf again, becauſe his Friend's Intereſt required it as he imagined: but in the fourth, he is repreſented at the Head of his Troops, breathing Revenge againſt the *Thebans*, and as eager as *Polynices* himſelf, whoſe Concern in the War was perſonal.

Or

Or till with Care the hoarſe-reſounding Shores,
Where *Inachus*, the King of Rivers, roars.
Of all, that o'er *Argia* bend their Courſe,
He reigns, excell'd by none in rapid Force,
When *Taurus*, and the wat'ry *Pleiades* riſe,
And *Jove* in kindly Show'rs deſerts the Skies.
To theſe ſucceed, whom ſwift *Aſterion* laves,
And *Eraſine* enfolds with ambient Waves;
Whom *Epidaure*'s impervious Walls ſurround,
And *Dyme*, with the Gifts of *Bacchus* crown'd.
Of *Pylian* Youths a martial Squadron came,
Tho' *Pylos* then could boaſt of little Fame;
And *Neſtor*, blooming in his ſecond Age
Declin'd the Charge, and check'd his youthful Rage.
Hippomedon, their hardy Chief, inſpires
The Love of War, and with Example fires.
A triple Creſt his dazzling Helmet grac'd.
An Iron Coat of Mail his Sides embrac'd.
A Golden Cuiraſs blazes on his Breaſt,
With all the Guilt of *Danaus* expreſt.
The Furies light, with inauſpicious Hands,
The Bridal Torch, and tie the nuptial Bands:
Their Sire each Inſtrument of Wrath ſupplies,
And views the treach'rous Swords with curious Eyes.
The graceful Hero rein'd a gen'rous Steed,
New to the Fight, and of *Nemæan* Breed.
From Earth emerging, Clouds of Duſt ariſe
Beneath their rapid Courſe, and veil the Skies.
So, when *Hyleus* from ſome Mountains Height,
Or hollow Cliff precipitates his Flight,

v. 197. *So, when* Hyleus.] *Hyleus* was a Centaur. This is one of the nobleſt Similes in all *Statius*, and the moſt juſtly correſponding

The bending Foreſts to the Shock give Way,
Stretch'd in long Ruin, and expos'd to Day.
The trembling Cattle headlong ſeek the Ground,
And *Oſſa* ſhudders at the diſtant Sound.
With Horror e'en his ſhaggy Brethren hear
The ruſhing Monſter, nor diſmiſs their Fear;
While *Peneus'* Waves, ſuſpended in their Courſe,
Roll backward, hopeleſs to withſtand his Force.
Who to deſcribe their Numbers can aſpire,
Or equal *Martial* with *Phœbean* Fire?
The great *Alcides* drains *Tyrinthe*'s Coaſt
Of all her Youths, to form a ſcanty Hoſt.
Tyrinthe ſtill the Sword with Glory wields,
And Warriors worthy of her Patron yields.
But Love of Glory, and a wealthy Soil,
Have made them more averſe to martial Toil.
Few human Footſteps in the Fields deſcry'd,
The curious Traveller ſcarce finds a Guide,
To lead him where the moſs-grown Turret ſtands,
And Walls, the Labour of *Ætnean* Hands.
Yet hence three hundred Youths to Fight repair,
Nor Swords, nor ſounding Slings employ their Care:
Each ſhew'd, like *Hercules*, in Savage Pride,
And on his Shoulders wore a Lion's Hide.
Their Spear a Trunk of Pine, a Quiver hung
Behind, and clatter'd as they march'd along.

ing in its Circumſtances to the Thing deſcribed. The Diction is lofty, the Images ſtriking, and the Application obviouſly proper and agreeable to the Subject. The Verſion, however ſhort it falls of the Original, may be ſufficient to ſhew there was an Endeavour at leaſt to imitate it.

v. 217. *The labour of* Ætnean *Hands*] *Tyrinthe* is reported to have been built by the *Cyclops*.

They

They ſing a *Pæan* in their Patron's Praiſe,
And in ſonorous Verſe his Labours raiſe.
With Joy the God from ſhaded *Oeta*'s Height
Hears his immortal Feats, and varied Fight.
From *Nemea* next a ſocial Squadron came,
And where *Molorchus*, crown'd with endleſs Fame,
Receiv'd the Warrior, ſpent with recent Toils,
And loaded with the Monſter's reeking Spoils.
The Straw-built Manſion, and adjacent Field,
With Art are imag'd on each brazen Shield,
The ſacred Oak reported to ſuſtain
His Bow unſtrung, and where he preſs'd the Plain,
But *Capaneus*, averſe to guide the Car,
On Foot o'erlook'd the Plain, and moving War.
A Shield he bore with four thick Folds o'ercaſt
Of tough Bull-hides, of ſolid Braſs the laſt.
Here *Vulcan* frees the Hydra's vital Breath,
And opes each ſecret Avenue to Death.
The Concave Snakes, in Silver carv'd, enfold,
While others ſeem to burn in mimic Gold,
Around its Iron Margin *Lerna* leads
Her azure Stream, and mingles with the Meads.
His ſhining Breaſt-plate was a mingled Maſs
Of ductile Gold and Rows of Mountain-Braſs.

v. 237. *But* Capanéus] The Poet uſhers in *Capaneus* with Abundance of Pomp: His Strength, his Size, his Tower-like Shield, in a Word, his whole Figure ſtrikes our Eyes in all the ſtrongeſt Colours of Poetry. He forces him on the Obſervation of the Reader by the Grandeur of his Deſcription; and raiſes our Expectations of him, intending to make him perform many remarkable Actions in the Sequel of the Poem and to become worthy of falling by the Hand of *Jove* himſelf. This Anecdote concerning his Spear is taken from *Homer*, and intended to raiſe the Idea of his Hero, by giving him ſuch as no other could wield.

Dreadful it gleam'd around: no female Art
Could to the pond'rous Metal Form impart.
A Giant on his Helmet frowns impreſt,
And triple were the Honours of his Creſt.
His Cypreſs-Spear with Steel encircled ſhone,
Not to be pois'd but by his Hands alone.
Ithome's Mountaineers beneath his Care,
And the *Meſſenians* to the Fight repair;
Where *Thrion*, and the craggy *Æpy* ſhow
Their Cliffs above, and *Pteleon*'s Walls below.
From *Helos*, famous for her gen'rous Race
Of Steeds, and *Dorion*, for the Bard's Diſgrace,
They ruſh.—Here *Thamyris* in ſinging ſtrove
To match the tuneful Progeny of *Jove*:
Unſkill'd to judge the future by the paſt,
He prov'd the Muſe's matchleſs Pow'r at laſt.
To Silence doom'd, no more he durſt aſpire
To raiſe his Voice, or ſtring the vanquiſh'd Lyre.
Conſtrain'd by Threats, or with Intreaties won,
The Prophet ſeeks the Fate he cannot ſhun.

v. 249. *No female Art*] *Statius* alludes here to a Cuſtom among the antient Heatheps of Mothers making this Species of Armour for their Sons.

v. 261. *Here* Thamyris] I am ſurprized, that *Statius*, who generally ſtrikes out of the common Track, ſhould be ſuch a Plagiary as to relate this after *Homer*; and more ſo, that he was ſo diffident of his own Abilities as to copy it ſo cloſely. The Words are nearly the ſame.

——— Δώριον, ἔνθα τε Μοῦσαι
Αντόμεναι, Θαμύριν τον Θρηϊκα παῦσαν ἀοιδῆς,
Οἰχαλίηθεν ἰόντα παρ' Εὐρύτου Οἰχαλιῆος.
Στεῦτο γὰρ εὐχόμενος νικησέμεν, εἴπερ ἂν αὐταὶ
Μοῦσαι ἀείδοιεν, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο.
Αἱδὶ χολωσαμεναι, πηρὸν θέσαν, αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὴν
Θεσπεσίην ἀφέλοντο, καὶ ἐκλελαθον κιθαριστύν. Lib. 2. V. 101. Catal.

Nor

Nor yet was Preſcience wanting to the Deed,
Full well he ſaw what Deſtiny decreed:
But *Phœbus*, hopeleſs to prolong his Date,
Withholds his Succour, and aſſents to Fate.
Yet more—unmindful of the late Portent,
His Spouſe accelerates the dire Event,
And, ſwell'd with Pride and vain Ambition, ſold
Her Huſband's Life for all-bewitching Gold.
Argia ſaw the Matron's guilty Views,
And that the Fates forbad her to refuſe;
Then unrepining, from her ſnowy Breaſt
She loos'd the Gift, and thus her will expreſt.
Theſe woeful Times far other Cares require
Than thoſe of coſtly Dreſs and rich Attire,
No more ſhall Art enhance *Argia*'s Charms,
While her dear Conſort ſheaths his Limbs in Arms;
A while without Reluctance I reſign
Thoſe Trifles, ſince for him alone I ſhine;
A while the Arts of *Pallas* ſhall employ
The penſive Hours, and Sorrow be my Joy:
A while a Suppliant to the Gods I'll mourn,
And weary Heav'n with Vows for his Return.
A greater Luſtre will each Jewel yield,
When crown'd with Laurels from the *Theban* Field,

v. 286. *Since for him*] This Conduct of *Argia*, however laudable it is in itſelf, would be eſteemed an unneceſſary Act of Politeneſs by our Modern Belles, who are generally careleſs and indifferent how they appear at Home, but never think themſelves ſufficiently decorated for the public View; as if their Huſbands had the leaſt Claim to their Care of their Perſons and Dreſs. But methinks it is highly indiſcreet in them to loſe the good Graces of their Huſbands in Hopes of extending their Conqueſts: as it would be deemed Folly in a King to go in queſt of new Countries before he had ſecured to himſelf the Poſſeſſion of thoſe already acquired.

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My Spouſe ſhall hail me Partner of his Reign,
And votive Choirs attend the crowded Fane.
Then to my Siſter let it be convey'd,
If this will gain her Huſband's ſocial Aid.
Hence Treaſon, Murder, Phrenzy, all the Woes
That ſhook the Augur's guilty Dome, aroſe.
Tiſiphone with ſecret Pleaſure ſmiles
At her ripe Project, and ſucceſsful Wiles.
Four rapid Courſers grace the Prophet's Car,
Of heav'nly Race, and thunder thro' the War.
From *Leda*'s Son he ſtole the matchleſs Breed
By mortal Mares, unequal to the Steed.
Parnaſſian Wreaths upon his Forehead ſhone,
And by his Habit was the Prophet known.
Green Olive-Leaves his glitt'ring Helm incloſe,
And from between his Creſts a Mitre roſe.
A Grove of Spears his better Hand ſuſtains,
His other moderates the flowing Reins.
Afar he ſhines, conſpicuous in the Field,
And waves the *Python* imag'd on his Shield.
A Troop of *Pylian* Youths ſurround his Car,
And *Amyclæans*, Partners in the War.
From *Malea*'s noted Shore a Squadron came,
And *Caria*, ſacred to *Diana*'s Name;
From fair *Eurotas*, crown'd with Olive-Groves,
And *Meſſe*, famous for her Silver Doves.
Him, as their Chief, a hardy Race attend,
Whom *Taygetus* and hilly *Pharis* ſend:

v. 315. *From* Malea's] *Malea* was a Promontory of *Peloponneſus*, noted for its dangeroua Rocks: it is ſituated between the Bays of *Argos* and *Laconia*, and is now called *Capo Malio di Santo Angelo*.

Cyllenius

Cyllenius trains them in the duſty Field
To War, and breathes a Soul untaught to yield.
Hence they no Cares for this frail Being feel,
But ruſh undaunted on the pointed Steel.
The Parents glory in their Offspring's Death,
And urge them to reſign their vital Breath:
Of all that crowd around the Fun'ral Pile,
The Mother is obſerv'd alone to ſmile.
A pair of Javelins arms their better Hand,
The Reins and ſtubborn Steed the left demand.
Bare are their Shoulders; floating from behind
A ſhaggy *Tunic* dances in the Wind.
The Swan reſigns the Honours of his Breaſt,
To grace their Helms, and form a riſing Creſt.
Nor did theſe march alone beneath his Care,
But ſocial *Elis* adds an equal Share.
Alpheus next affords his *Piſa*'s Aid,
Who ſeeks thro' Seas the lov'd *Sicilian* Maid.
Their Chariots hide the Plain. Their Horſes feel,
Inſtead of Spurs, the Dart and pointed Steel.
From horrid Rites their preſent Skill aroſe,
And to an impious Source its Progreſs owes:
What Time *Oenomaus*, from his Car o'erthrown,
Reſign'd at once his Life, his Fame and Crown.
Their Courſers champ the Bit, or paw the Ground,
And ſcatter Clouds of Smoke and Foam around.

v. 337.] *So* Lucan.

——populisque per æquora mittens
Sicaniis *Alpheus* aquas. Book 3. Ver. 176.

v. 341. *From horrid Rites*] For an Account of this Cuſtom, and *Oenomaus*, ſee Note on the firſt Book, Verſe 382.

Parthenopæus next, by Stealth repairs
To *Argos*, and eludes his Mother's Cares.

v. 347. Parthenopæus] *Taſſo* ſeems to have copied his Account of *Rinaldo*'s Flight from this of *Parthenopæus*.

All'or (nè pur tre luſtri avea finiti)
Fuggì ſoletto, e corſe ſtrade ignote;
Varcò l'Egeo, paſſò di Grecia i liti,
Giunſe nel campo in region remote;
Nobiliſſima fuga, e che l' imiti
Ben degna alcun magnanimo Nipote.
Tre anni ſon, ch' è in guerra, e intempeſtiva
Molle piuma del mento à pena uſciva. Canto 1.

As we have now ſeen the ſeven Heroes armed and accoutred for Battle, it will be worth while to take a critical Review of them, and ſee how the Poet has acquitted himſelf in the Deſcription. Though I cannot anſwer for the different Taſtes of Readers, yet I flatter myſelf with the Hopes of their Approbation, with reſpect to the Author. The chief Beauty here is Variety, without which all the ſubaltern Decorations of Imagery, Diction and Numbers are entirely loſt, as they are common to other Parts of the Poem. To diſcover this in his Characters, we need only to review them diſtinctly; and we ſhall find that of *Adraſtus* to be no other than we can expect in a Man of his Years and Inclinations. Excluſive of the Cares for his People, Old Age naturally creates an Averſion to War, as it is ſo diametrically oppoſite to their *Summum Bonum*, Tranquillity. *Polynices*, though by no Means a Coward, ſeems to like the War no farther than as it is conducive to his Intereſt, and the Inſtrument of gratifying his Ambition. The Love of Glory, abſtracted from that of Empire, ſeems to have but little Influence over him; but, when united with it, inſpirits him to the higheſt Degree of Heroiſm. *Tydeus*, ſubject as he ſeems to be to the Impreſſions of Glory and Fame, confides more in the Juſtice of his Cauſe, than any other Motive. As he has no perſonal Intereſt in the War, his Inclination to it muſt ariſe either from the Thirſt of Glory or Deſire of Revenge: As to the firſt, we may conclude, from the whole Tenor of his Conduct, that it could not engage him in ſupporting Injuſtice, ſince his Attachment to *Polynices* was owing to his Love of the oppoſite Virtue: The Deſire of Revenge then is the prevailing Motive, but only ſo far as it is founded on an honourable Baſis, and reſulting, as I have before obſerved, from the Juſtice of the Cauſe. *Hippomedon* and *Parthenopæus* are repreſented as two daring Youths, who had no perſonal Prejudices againſt the *Thebans*, nor lay under any Obligations to the Court of *Argos*; their ſole Inducements were the Love of Glory, and Study of War, un-

de

As yet a beardleſs Youth, the Troops he led,
And ſhone in Arms, conſpicuous at their Head.
Chance aids his Flight: For while the Matron roves
Thro' diſtant Tracts of Land, and ſhadowy Groves,
The daring Youth, impell'd by adverſe Fates,
O'erleap'd the Wall, and forc'd the Palace-Gates.
In Form and Feature ev'ry Son of Fame
Reſign'd the Prize, nor durſt diſpute his Claim.
Nor had his Courage, and Deſert in Arms
Been deem'd inferior to his outward Charms,
But Death o'ertook him, ere the rip'ning Sun
Of Manhood on his budding Strength had ſhone.
His Beauty fir'd each Guardian of the Grove,
The Gods with Envy, and the Nymphs with Love.
Fame tells, *Diana*, when ſhe firſt ſurvey'd
The little Wanton ſporting in the Shade,
Forgave his Mother's Flame, and broken Vow,
And grac'd him with a Quiver and a Bow.
He ſprings, impatient for the mix'd Alarms
Of ſhrilling Clarions, and reſounding Arms,

per ſo experienced a General as *Adraſtus*. The warlike Diſpoſition of *Capaneus* ariſes rather from a Principle of Inhumanity. He is a meer Homicide, and ſatiable by Blood and Carnage only. His Behaviour to *Amphiaraus*, however palliated with the ſpecious Pretence of Friendſhip to *Tydeus*, is arrogant, impious, and inhuman: His Conſciouſneſs of ſuperior Valour makes him proud; his Pride, impatient of Reproof; and his Impatience of Reproof hurries him on to Impiety and Cruelty. The laſt, who offers himſelf to our View, is *Amphiaraus*, a Chief of a meek, diſpaſſionate Temper, who naturally prefers the Sweets of Peace to the Hurry and Fatigue of a military Life. He was told that his Fate was inevitable, and, in Conſequence of this Prediction, puts a good Face on it, and marches to Battle with a philoſophic Calmneſs and Reſignation to the Divine Will.

And burns to mingle in the duſty Courſe
Of crimſon War, and curb a captive Horſe.
No more he joys to range the guiltleſs Wood
With Arrows, innocent of human Blood.
Above the reſt he ſhines in flaming Gold,
And *Tyrian* Purple, glorious to behold.
His Mother's Combats in th' *Ætolian* Field
He bears engrav'd upon his ſlender Shield.
A Quiver, fraught with *Gnoſſian* Shafts he bore,
Of Amber fram'd, with Jaſpers ſtudded o'er.
A Lynx's ſpotted Hide adorns his Steed,
Which match'd the Stag or Weſtern Wind in Speed.
With Pride he bounds beneath th' unwonted Load
Of gleaming Armour, fit to grace a God.
His Maſter ſmiles: the Roſes on his Cheek,
And youthful Bloom his tender Age beſpeak,
To him th' *Arcadian* Youths with Joy reſign
The chief Command, and clad in Armour ſhine.
Fame ſays, from op'ning Trees they took their Birth,
When human Footſteps ſeal'd the new born Earth;
And flouriſh'd, ere revolving *Cynthia* ſhone,
Or devious Planets gleam'd around her Throne.
No Houſes then repell'd the driving Rain,
Nor *Ceres* glitter'd on the yellow Plain;

v. 387. *Fame ſays*] *Evander* gives a ſimilar Account of thoſe *Arcadians*, who planted a Colony in *Italy*.

Gensque virûm truncis et duro robore nata:
Queis neque mos, neque cultus erat: nec jungere tauros,
Aut componere opes norant, aut parcere parto. Æneid.

And *Ovid* mentions their Antiquity.

Ante Jovem genitum terras habuiſſe feruntur
Arcades, et Lunâ gens prior illa fuit.

No Temples lodg'd the ſculptur'd Form of *Jove*,
Nor *Hymen* ſanctified the Flames of Love.
Oft did the pregnant Oak its Sides uncloſe,
Nor aſk'd *Lucina*'s Hand to eaſe its Throes.
With Horror and Amaze they firſt ſurvey'd
The ſwift Viciſſitudes of Light and Shade;
And, when the Sun withdrew its ſetting Ray,
Fear'd an eternal Abſence of the Day.
From *Mænalos* th' aſſembling Ruſtics rove,
And quit, in Crouds, the black *Parthenian* Grove.
Then *Rhipe*, on her ſnowy Cliffs reclin'd,
And high *Eniſpe*, obvious to the Wind.
From *Stratie* the raging Hinds deſcend;
Tegæan Swains the Exile's Cauſe befriend.
Cyllene mourns her deſert Height in vain;
And *Pallas* weeps for her diſpeopled Plain.
They flock from where the gentle *Ladon* glides,
And rapid *Cliton* rolls his hoarſer Tides.
Where white *Lampia* thunders in his Courſe,
And *Peneus*, whence the *Styx* derives his Source.
From *Azan* then they ſought the deathful Field,
To which in Howlings *Ida*'s Self muſt yield.
Like Waves, they pour from the *Parrhaſian* Grove,
Sacred to *Cupid*, and the Queen of Love:
Where, to facilitate *Calyſto*'s Rape,
Great *Jove* aſſum'd *Diana*'s Arms and Shape.

v. 414. *To which in Howlings*] There was a Temple here dedicated to *Cybele*, whoſe Votaries were obliged to howl in a peculiar Manner, during the Solemnization of the ſacred Rites.

v. 418. *Great* Jove *aſſum'd*] There was a particular Reaſon for his being diſguiſed in this Manner: *Calyſto* being one of *Diana*'s Virgin Attendants.

Orcho-

Orchomenos, whoſe Plains in Sheep abound,
And *Cynoſure*, for Savage Beaſts renown'd.
Then *Mars* depopulates th' *Æphytian* Plains,
And lofty *Pſophis* of her Warriors drains:
Stymphalus next, and where in Days of Yore
The brave *Alcides* ſlew the foaming Boar.
Arcadians all: tho' various in their Name,
And Manners, yet their Nation was the ſame.
For Javelins ſome huge *Paphian* Myrtles wield,
Whilſt others, arm'd with Sheep-Crooks take the Field.
Theſe, ſkilful Archers, bend the ſtubborn Bow,
And thoſe with Stakes alone provoke the Foe.
One in a ſpreading Hat his Hair confines,
Another in a creſted Helmet ſhines.
Thoſe with the Spoils of ſome huge Monſter hide
Their Features, glorying in terrific Pride.
Mycenæ's Sons alone withheld their Aid,
Nor they with neutral Eaſe the War ſurvey'd:
The Sun's abrupt Retreat, and impious Rage
Of adverſe Brothers, all their Arms engage.
Meanwhile th' ungrateful Meſſenger in Tears
The mournful Tale to *Atalanta* bears;
How her raſh Son had fought the *Theban* Fight,
With all the Youths, Companions in his Flight.
Her fainty Limbs with ſudden Horror ſhook;
The falling Bow her feeble Graſp forſook:
Swift as the Wind, impatient of Delay,
Thro' adverſe Woods and Streams ſhe forc'd her Way.

v. 423. *And where in Days*] This was *Erymanthus*.

v. 438. *Of adverſe Brothers*] viz. *Atreus* and *Thyeſtes*, whoſe Story is too well known to need any farther Elucidation.

Her

Her Hair, diſhevell'd, in Confuſion flies,
Her naked Breaſts in wild Emotion riſe.
The Tigreſs thus, with dreadful Anguiſh ſtung,
Purſues the Spoiler, and demands her Young.
At length ſhe ſnatch'd his Courſer's foaming Reins,
And the pale Warrior thus a while detains.
Whence ſprings this impotent, this uſeleſs Rage,
This Heat, that ill becomes thy tender Age?
Canſt thou th' experienc'd Soldier's Hardſhips bear,
In Toils conſume the Day, the Night in Care?
Canſt thou the Falchion wield, and bend the Bow,
Or with the Strength I wiſh, repel the Foe?
Haſt thou forgot, when on *Cyllene*'s Height
Thy ſlacken'd Knees could ſcarce ſupport thy Weight,
While the fierce Boar—the Terror of the Wood,
Cloſe at thy Side, with threat'ning Aſpect ſtood?
How little had avail'd this uſeleſs Blade,
Had my unerring Shafts withheld their Aid!
But here, alas! a Mother's Art muſt fail,
Nor *Lycian* Bows, or *Gnoſſian* Shafts avail.
Nor will the truſted Courſer Aid ſupply,
When the loud Tumult ſpeaks the Battle nigh.

v. 453. *Whence ſprings*] The Abruptneſs of this Oration admirably expreſſes the violence of Affection in *Atalanta*; and the Silence of *Parthenopæus* on the other Hand, has a beautiful Effect. We may ſuppoſe, it was a dreadful Mortification to the young Adventurer, (who aſſumed the Man as much as poſſible) to be called a ſmock-faced Boy, reminded of his Weakneſs, and deſired to return home, among a Croud of ſneering Warriors. *Barthius*, a Critic of Eminence, in the Height of Rapture on this Occaſion, cries out, *Mirus talium artifex Papinius!*

v. 466. *Nor* Lycian *Bows*] They were held in the greateſt Requeſt among the ancient Heathens. The Arrows were called *Gnoſſian* from *Gnoſſus*, a City of *Crete*.

In vain you mingle with the Sons of *Mars*,
Scarce qualified to ſerve in *Cupid*'s Wars.
Nor were there Omens wanting to diſcloſe
Thy cruel Flight, the Source of future Woes:
Diana's Fane a ſudden Tremor ſhook;
The Goddeſs frown'd, and angry was her Look:
The falling Trophies ſhook the ſacred Floor,
Theſe Arrows carry certain Death no more,
But, erring from the Mark, deſert the Bow:
Nor my faint Arms their wonted Vigour know.
A while await, and check thy youthful Rage,
Till Strength ſucceed, the Gift of riper Age;
Till the ſoft Down thy tender Cheeks embrace,
And ſtamp an Air of Manhood on thy Face:
Nor Tears, nor Pray'rs ſhall then retard thy Flight;
Myſelf will arm thee for the glorious Fight.
Hence then—Nor let me here in vain repine;
Will you, his Comrades, aid the raſh Deſign?
How well thoſe ſtubborn Hearts which nought can move,
Your ſteely Race, and inbred Rigour prove!
Here paus'd the Matron: the ſurrounding Chiefs
Strive to remove her Fears, and ſoothe her Griefs.

v. 470. *Scarce qualified*] Thoſe Commentators who bring an Author off upon every Occaſion with this Excuſe, that he was obliged to conform to the national Cuſtom of the Times, may find an Apology for this Raillery of *Atalanta*; but I am confident it would be eſteemed indelicate, if not indecent and immodeſt in a modern Female.

v. 475. *The falling*] So *Lucan*.

——————Delapſaque templis
Dona ſuis. *Pharſal.* B. 1.

Scarce

Scarce, when the Trumpet ſounds the laſt Alarms,
Can ſhe diſmiſs him from her pious Arms;
Oft ſhe commends him to the Monarch's Care,
And thus awhile retards the Fate of War.
Meanwhile an honeſt Shame the *Thebans* awes,
And cools their Ardor in the Royal Cauſe;
With juſt Averſion they awhile delay'd
The Town's Defence, nor march in queſt of Aid.
Tho' Fear-inſpiring Fame increas'd their Woes,
Doubling the Strength and Number of the Foes.
No wonted Eagerneſs to take the Field
Impells to fix th' hereditary Shield,
None fit the Rein, to check or urge his Speed,
And animate to Fight the ſnorting Steed:
Heartleſs and void of military Rage,
They ſought the Combat, and, conſtrain'd, engage.
Each ſeeks a juſt Pretence to ſhun his Doom;
One pleads a num'rous Progeny at home:
Another for his pregnant Conſort fears,
Or mourns his Sire infirm and worn with Years.

v. 491. *Scarce when the Trumpet*] Every one of my Readers, who has undergone the like ſevere Trial, muſt ſympathize with the diſconſolate *Atalanta*, and confeſs the Poet to be a faithful Interpreter of Nature. It is ſo common in theſe Interviews to make Uſe of ſuch Repetitions, and ſummon the meereſt Trifles to one's Aid, in Order to effect a ſhort Delay, and put off the Anguiſh of the parting Moment. *Lucan* ſays of *Pompey*:

——— Mentem jam verba paratam
Deſtituunt, blandæque juvat ventura trahentem
Indulgere moræ, et tempus ſubducere fatis.

v. 495. *Meanwhile an honeſt Shame*] The Poet has made a juſt Diſtinction between the Diſpoſition of the Allies and the *Thebans* to begin Hoſtilities. The former, conſcious of their own Innocence, march to Battle with the greateſt Confidence and Alacrity; the latter, ſenſible of the unjuſt Cauſe they are engaged in, and ſupporting, are repreſented as dejected, timorous, and deſponding.

The

The God of War inſpir'd no martial Rage:
Their Walls, decay'd with gath'ring Filth and Age,
And Tow'rs, which at *Amphion*'s Call aroſe,
On ev'ery Side a threat'ning Gap diſcloſe:
But now, alas! no Bard with ſkilful Hand
Repairs the Breach, or bids the Rampire ſtand.
But ſocial Love the ſtern *Bœotian* warms,
To ſnatch from hoſtile Rage, and impious Arms,
The Liberties of *Thebes*, and ancient Laws,
And aid the Public, not the Royal Cauſe.
As, when the Wolf, with raging Hunger bold,
Has bath'd the Plain in Blood, or ſtorm'd the Fold,
With Paunch diſtended, and with lolling Tongue,
He ſhuns the Vengeance of the ruſtic Throng;
And, conſcious of the Crime, at ev'ry Sound
Exerts his Speed, and hurls his Eyes around.
Thus did each freſh Report of Fame ſuggeſt
The Fears of Vengeance to the Tyrant's Breaſt.
One ſpreads a Rumour, that *Lernæan* Horſe
From old *Aſopus* bent to *Thebes* their Courſe;

v. 521. *As when the Wolf*] The guilty Conſcience of *Eteocles* is well illuſtrated in this Compariſon: The Outlines of this ſpeaking Picture were copied from *Homer* on a ſimilar Subject.

Ἀλλ' ὅγ' ἄρ' ἴτρισε θηρὶ κακὸν ῥέξαντι ἐοικώς,
Ὅς τε κύνα κτείνας, ἢ βεκόλον ἀμφὶ βόεσσιν,
Φεύγει, πρίν περ ὁμιλον ἀολλισθήμεναι ἀνδρῶν.

Virgil has copied it likewiſe.

Ac velut ille, prius quam tela inimica ſequantur,
Continuò in montes ſeſe avius abdidit altos
Occiſo paſtore lupus, magnove juvenco,
Conſcius audacis facti: caudamque remulcens
Subjecit pavitantem utero, ſylvaſque petivit.

Virgil has undoubtedly the Advantage in Point of Subject; though I think the Simile itſelf is more copious, and contains a greater Aſſemblage of Images in our Author.

Another,

Another, that *Cithæron*'s tow'ring Height
Was occupied, a Prelude to the Fight:
A third relates, that fam'd *Platæa* ſhone
With hoſtile Fires, and Splendors not her own.
Then *Parian* Images at ev'ry Pore
Were ſeen to ſweat, and *Dirce* bluſh'd with Gore.
Again on Earth the ſpeaking Sphynx was heard,
And monſtrous Births the teeming Mother ſcar'd.
On ev'ry Breaſt preſaging Terror ſate,
Fraught with ſome Omen of approaching Fate.
But lo! a fiercer Object ſtrikes their Eyes,
Forth thro' the Streets the frantic Prieſteſs flies
Of *Bacchus*, and from his deſerted Fane
With Hair diſhevel'd ruſh'd along the Plain.
She wildly ſtar'd, and urg'd with Rage divine,
Shook high above her Head a flaming Pine.
Enthuſiaſtic Heavings ſwell'd her Breaſt,
And thus her Voice th' informing God addreſt.
Almighty Pow'r! whoſe Aid we boaſt no more,
Transferr'd from *Thebes* to ſome more favour'd Shore;

v. 535, *Then* Parian *Images*] Some of theſe Prognoſtics are mentioned by *Lucan*, as preceding the Civil War.

Monſtroſiſque hominum partus, numeroque modoque
Membrorum, matremque ſuus conterruit infans:

And again:

Indigetes fleviſſe Deos, urbiſque laborem
Teſtatos ſudore Lares. —— *Pharſ.* B. 1.

v. 541. *But lo! a fiercer Object*] This is a beautiful Imitation of the following Paſſage in *Lucan*.

Terruerant ſatis hæc pavidam præſagia plebem:
Sed majora premunt. Nam qualis vertice Pindi
Edonis Ogygio decurrit plena Lyæo:
Talis et attonitam rapitur matrona per urbem,
Vocibus his prodens urgentem pectora Phœbum.

And the Prophecy, annexed to it, excels the Original.

Whether

Whether you ſhake beneath the Northern Pole
Your wreathed Spear, and fire the *Thracian*'s Soul;
Or bid the mangled Vine revive again,
While ſtern *Lycurgus* threats, but threats in vain:
Whether you rage, where down a length'ning Steep
The *Ganges* ruſhes, mingling with the Deep;
Or from the Spring of *Hermus* riſe in Gold,
Whoſe parting Waves the ſacred Ore unfold:
Incline thine Ear: nor let us e'er deſpair
Of Aid, nor mourn thy alienated Care.
For royal Perjuries, nor Crimes our own,
We weep in Slaughter, and in War atone;
Yet ſtill, O *Bacchus*, we thy Pow'r obey,
And Gifts unceaſing on thy Altars lay.
But, ere I ſpeak, what wretched *Thebes* muſt feel
And Truths, invidious to the Great, reveal;
Tranſport, and waft me to the Northern Pole,
Where endleſs Froſts the Rays of *Sol* controul.
Was it for this I was conſtrain'd to ſwear,
When firſt the ſacred Fillets bound my Hair?

v. 553. *Or bid the mangled Vine*] *Lycurgus*, King of *Thrace*, cauſed moſt of the Vines to be rooted up, ſo that his Subjects were obliged to mix it with Water, when it was leſs plentiful: Hence it was feigned, that he drove *Bacchus* himſelf out of *Thrace*, and that *Thetis* received him into her Boſom, according to the following Lines of *Homer*.

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὐδὲ Δρύαντος, ὑὸς κρατεροῦ Λυκόοργος
Δὴν ἦν, ὃς ῥα θεοῖσιν ἐπουρανίοισιν ἐριζεν.
Ὃς ποτε μαινομένοιο Διωνύσοιο τιθηνὰς
Σεῦε κατ' ἠγάθεον Νυσσήϊον· αἱ δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι
Θύσθλα χαμαὶ κατέχευαν, ὑπ' ἀνδροφόνοιο Λυκούργου
Θεινόμεναι βουπλῆγι. Διώνυσος δὲ φοβηθεὶς
Δύσεθ' ἁλὸς κατὰ κῦμα· Θέτις δ' ὑπεδέξατο κόλπῳ
Δειδιότα. Iliad, B. 6. V. 130.

I ſee

I ſee two ſtately Monarchs of the Mead,
Their Honours equal, and the ſame their Breed,
With claſhing Horns, and butting Heads engage,
And fall the Victims of each other's Rage.
More guilty he, who ſcorns a Share to yield,
And claims the ſole Poſſeſſion of the Field:
Meanwhile a Friend to neither wears the Spoils,
And reaps the Harveſt of their bloody Toils.
Here paus'd the Dame: th' exhauſted Fury ceas'd,
And, ebbing in her Soul, the God decreas'd.
Urg'd by theſe Omens, and ſuperior Dread,
The King for Counſel to *Tireſias* fled;
Blind was the Seer, yet boundleſs was his View,
The preſent, future, and the paſt he knew.

v. 577. *Meanwhile a Friend*] This was *Creon*, who ſeized the Kingdom of *Thebes* after the Death of the two Brothers, figured under the two Bulls.

As I am not often guilty of troubling the Reader with verbal Criticiſms and various Readings, I hope he will pardon me, for barely mentioning a trifling Diſpute, which hath ariſen about the 576th Verſe, between two celebrated verbal Critics. One of them contends warmly that we ſhould read *Mountain*; alledging, the Suppoſition to be more natural of Beaſts feeding there than on a *Field*, as I have tranſlated it. This muſt ſurely be a Controverſy about nothing, the Meaning of the Author in the Words *communem Montem* is nothing more than a *Paſture* common to both. One of theſe Diſputants has quoted from *Virgil*, in Support of his Opinion

Stupet inſcius alto
Accipiens ſonitum ſaxi de vertice Paſtor

Forgetting that the ſame Author had ſaid in the 12th Book

Ac velut ingenti Sila, ſummove Taburno
Cum duo converſis inimica in prælia tauri
Frontibus incurrunt.

Here *Taburnus* and *Sila* are two Mountains, and Bulls are feeding on them; whereas in the other they are Sheep, as appears from the Word *Paſtor*, and the Place they were feeding on, a Rock.

No Sacrifice employs his pious Cares,
Nor th' Augur's Art his lawful Notice ſhares,
Nor ſeeks he from preſaging Veins to prove,
Or learn in *Delphic* Caves the Will of *Jove*;
No liſt'ning Stars his potent Charms invoke,
Nor fragrant Altars yield prophetic Smoke:
But horrid Arts of Magic are explor'd,
And *Stygian* Rites, by *Jove* and Heav'n abhor'd,
Oft he diſpeoples *Pluto*'s airy Reign,
And bids reviving Phantoms breathe again.
Of blaſted Sheep, ſelected from the Field,
Whoſe Fleeces ſtill the Stench of Sulphur yield,
The mangled Entrails firſt are cull'd with Care,
Then cleans'd with Graſs, and hallow'd with a Prayer.
There grew a Wood, ſuperior to the Rage
Of wintry Tempeſts, and corroding Age;
Whoſe Boughs with interweaving Union form
A Shade, impervious to the Sun and Storm.
Invidious Winds at awful Diſtance fly,
And glancing Light'nings ſhoot obliquely by.
No Breeze in murm'ring Sounds is heard to breathe,
The ſame eternal Horror broods beneath.
Some ſcatter'd Images of Light invade,
And but enhance the Terror of the Shade.
Nor was the ſacred Silence of the Grove
Unnotic'd by the Progeny of *Jove*;

v. 599. *There grew*] The two celebrated Deſcriptions of a Wood in *Lucan* and *Taſſo* are, I think, inferior to this before us. The five firſt Verſes in the Original are highly finiſhed; but the laſt is inexpreſſibly beautiful. The Deſcription of *Lucan* is in the 3d Book of his *Pharſalia*, and that of *Taſſo* in the 13th Canto of his *Jeruſalem*.

Latona's

Latonia's Form, engrav'd on ev'ry Tree,
Atteſts the Preſence of the Deity.
Oft have her Shafts reſounded thro' the Glade,
And howling Dogs her paſſing Orb betray'd;
As from her Uncle's dark Domains ſhe flies,
And in *Diana*'s Form deſerts the Skies.
But, when the Mountains glitter with her Light,
And the ſtill Hours to pleaſing Sleep invite;
Here on her Quiver ſhe reclines her Head,
With Heaps of glitt'ring Jav'lins round her ſpread.
Before the Entrance lies the Field of *Mars*,
Fam'd for its Iron Crop and riſing Wars.
Bold was the Wretch who durſt explore again
The fatal Horrors of the bloody Plain;
And, heedleſs of the paſt, employ his Toil
To turn, and exerciſe the guilty Soil.
Oft (as Fame tells) the Earth in Sounds of Woe
Is heard to groan from hollow Depths below,
When her indignant Sons in Fight engage,
And deal their Blows around with airy Rage.
The trembling Ruſtic leaves his Work undone,
And lowing Herds the dreaded Iſſue ſhun.
Here (for the Place itſelf convenient lies
For *Stygian* Rites, and impious Aid ſupplies)

v. 611. Latonia's *Form*] This Goddeſs was called *Luna* in Heaven, *Diana* upon Earth, and *Proſerpine* in Hell. In the *Pagan* Theology it was very uſual for their Gods to have many Names, as well as many Offices. This Piece of Superſtition is exactly copied from them by the Papiſts, in the ſeveral Employments which are aſſigned to their Saints.

v. 629. *When her indignant Sons*] Theſe were ſuppoſed to be the Souls of thoſe Warriors who aroſe from the Dragon's Teeth, and fell in a Conflict among themſelves.

Are brought young Steers, unknowing of the Yoke,
And ſable Sheep to grace the fatal Stroke;
Each Hill and Vale th' unwonted Silence mourns,
And ecchoing *Dirce* Groan for Groan returns.
Tireſias firſt (as Cuſtom taught) adorns
With azure Wreaths of Flow'rs their tender Horns,
Then fills the hollow'd Entrance of the Wood
With Bowls of Wine and Milk, a mingled Flood:
Honey and Blood, the laſt with trembling Hands
He pours, as oft as the parch'd Earth demands.
For *Hecate*, firſt of all th' immortal Train
They heap a triple Pile upon the Plain;
Three Sylvan Structures to the Furies riſe,
Whoſe leſs'ning Summits mingle with the Skies:
The laſt of Pine to *Stygian Jove* they rear,
Broad was the Baſe, the Top advanc'd in Air.
To *Proſerpine*, aſſign'd to laſting Night,
An Altar riſes of inferior Height.
The Fabric's Front and ample Sides they ſtrew
With Boughs of Cypreſs, and the baleful Yew.
Then with his crooked Knife *Tireſias* trac'd
The deſtin'd Mark, and pure Libations plac'd

v. 653. *The Fabric's Front*] The Verſes in ſome Editions of the Original are

Frondes atque omne cupreſſus
Intexit plorata latus.

Which I think can ſcarcely be underſtood. Therefore, inſtead of *Frondes*, read *Frontes*, which elucidates the whole Sentence, and then the Senſe will be clearly this: *The baleful Cypreſs covered the Top and Sides of the Pile.* This Alteration ſeems neceſſary, and it is favoured by the Authority of *Virgil*, who in the 6th Book ſays,

Ingentem ſtruxere pyram, cui frondibus atris

Intexit

Between their Horns: beneath the piercing Wound
The Victims fall, and headlong ſpurn the Ground.
Fair *Mantho* in a Bowl of ample Size
Receives the Blood, and to her Lips applies.
The lukewarm Vitals next the Virgin ſought
(As Cuſtom and her Sire's Example taught)
Thrice round each ſmoaking Altar ſhe convey'd
The ſacred Off'rings in a Charger laid;
With Loads of Fuel heaps the kindled Fire,
And bids the lambent Flames to Heav'n aſpire.
But, when the Prophet heard the crackling Wood,
And felt the Heat, as near the Pile he ſtood,
Forth from his Breaſt theſe dreadful Accents broke,
The flaming Structure trembling as he ſpoke;
Ye chearleſs Manſions of eternal Woe,
And thou, ſole Arbiter of all below!
Whom ruthleſs Fate and Chance ordain to ſway
The *Stygian* Realms, and empty Shades obey;

Intexit latera, et ferales *ante* Cupreſſus
Conſtituunt.

The Reader will obſerve, that *ante* implies the Top or Front, and anſwers to the Word *Frontes* in our Author.

v. 667. *But, when the Prophet*] The Reader will do himſelf a Pleaſure by comparing the following Account of theſe Ceremonies with that of *Lucan* in the 6th Book of his *Pharſalia*. It is evidently copied from the latter, as may be eaſily diſcerned from an attentive Peruſal of both. I muſt beg Leave to obſerve, that the Deſcription before us is more opportune and ſtrongly connected with the Subject than in *Lucan*: Nay, it ſeems more natural, that *Eteocles*, after ſuch a Complication of Guilt and Wickedneſs, ſhould be anxious and ſolicitous concerning the Event of the War, than *Sextus*, who was engaged in a doubly juſt Cauſe. I would not be underſtood to ſpeak in Prejudice of *Lucan*, who has not only adorned his Subject by this Digreſſion from it, but fully compenſated for its unſeaſonable Inſertion. Give me Leave to add, that *Saul*'s Application to the Witch of *Endor* was owing to the ſame Motives, and attended with ſimilar Circumſtances.

Tranſport thoſe Phantoms that for Entrance wait
And loiter yet before the gloomy Gate.
May *Charon*'s Veſſel groan beneath the Weight,
And ſcarce reſtore to *Styx* the mighty Freight.
Nor let the Dead in one promiſcuous Train
Revive, and view the Light of Heav'n again:
From fair *Elyſium* let the Juſt repair
Beneath thy Conduct, and engage thy Care;
With thee ſhall *Hermes* ſhare the due Command,
Direct their Paſſage, and exert his Wand.
But let *Tiſiphone* the Light diſcloſe
To them whoſe Crimes deſerve eternal Woes,
Without Compunction and Remiſſion ſhake
Her flaming Torch and open ev'ry Snake;
Let *Cerberus* his uſual Rage reſtrain,
And yield the Paſſage to the guilty Train.
Of theſe innumerable is the Throng,
And yet the greateſt Part to *Thebes* belong.
He paus'd, unmov'd, and reſolutely bent
To prove the Iſſue, and await th' Event:
Nor was the Nymph deficient in her Part,
For *Phœbus* had inur'd her tender Heart.
Eteocles alone was ſeen to fear;
Convuls'd his Limbs, and pale his Cheeks appear,
One while the Prophet's aged Hands he preſs'd,
The Mantle then, that grac'd his awful Breaſt.

v. 683. *With thee ſhall* Hermes] *Horace* aſſigns this God to the ſame Office.

Tu pias lætis animas reponis
Sedibus: virgâque levem coërces
Aureâ turbam, ſuperis Deorum
Gratus, et imis.

[Would

Would Decency permit he fain would ſhun
The Sequel, nor conclude the Rites begun.
Thus, when the bold *Gætulian* from afar
Hears the rous'd Lion ruſhing to the War,
Aſham'd to fly, nor daring to advance,
He ſtands unmov'd, and graſps the ſweating Lance.
His Doubts to Fears, his Fears to Anguiſh grow,
As nearer he perceives the wrathful Foe;
So fierce he thunders through the ruſtling Wood,
So loud he roars, and ſpeaks his Luſt of Food.
But old *Tireſias*, impotent to bear
This ſeeming Scorn, repeats his former Pray'r:
Ye Pow'rs, for whom theſe pure Libations flow,
And Heav'n and Earth with ſacred Splendors glow,
Atteſt the fatal Truth of what I ſay,
And learn, our Charge admits of no Delay.
Say, am I yet, ye ſullen Fiends, obey'd,
Or muſt I call *Theſſalian* Hags to aid?
Whoſe potent Charms, and myſtic Verſe ſhall ſhake
The Realms of Æther, and the *Stygian* Lake:
Diſcloſe your Will, ye Siſters of Deſpair,
Say, do theſe juſt Commands employ your Care?
Shall Earth's weak Barrier with a Yawn give Way,
And join the upper and the nether Day;
(Since you refuſe to bid the Dead return,
And leave inviolate each loaded Urn)

v. 701. *Would Decency permit*] Never was the Influence of Conſcience better proved, than in this Deſcription of *Eteocles*'s Conduct. His Timidity firſt ſpurs him on to learn the Fortune of the War by Necromancy; but when the Rites are almoſt finiſhed, and the Hour drawing on that muſt determine his future Happineſs or Miſery, the Horrors of Guilt increaſe ſo much upon him, that he would fain have retired, well aſſured in himſelf, that he had no Reaſon to expect, and conſequently ſhould find nothing in his Favour.

Or will ye cut and maim the bloodleſs Head,
And cull the Fibres of the recent Dead?
Ill ye deſpiſe th' Infirmities of Age
Which yet retains the fatal Pow'r to rage.
We know, whate'er you labour to conceal,
And can, at Will, thoſe Myſteries reveal.
Our Vengeance lab'ring *Hecate* ſhould know,
But pious Awe diverts a while the Blow.
Nor does the triple King, whoſe Name alone
You hear with Terror, as his Pow'r you own,
From us lie hid;—but Love of calm Repoſe,
The Joy of Age, forbids me to diſcloſe.
Here on his threatning Speech the Prieſteſs broke,
And thus her interrupted Sire beſpoke.
Forbear theſe uſeleſs Threats, thy Pray'rs have ſped,
And Hell no more withholds the ſummon'd Dead.

v. 735. *Nor does the triple King.*] In the Works of the ancient Poets we find many confuſed Hints and imperfect Accounts concerning the Exiſtence of a great, omnipotent and eternal Being, diſtinguiſhed by the Name of Demogorgon. All I can collect from them amounts to ſhew, that he was the Father and Creator of all the other Gods; and, though bound in Chains of Adamant in the loweſt Part of Hell, was yet ſo terrible to all the other Deities, that they could not bear the very Mention of his Name. *Lucan* has mentioned him in the following Verſes.

—— An ille
Compellandus erit, quo nunquam terra vocato
Non concuſſa tremit, qui Gorgona cernit apertam,
Verberibuſque ſuis trepidam caſtigat Erinnyn,
Indeſpecta tenet vobis qui Tartara; cujus
Vos eſtis ſuperi; Stygias qui pejerat undas.

Spencer has alluded to the Notion of his Pre-exiſtence to the other Gods, in his Apoſtrophe to Night.

O thou, moſt ancient Grandmother of all,
More old than *Jove*, whom thou at firſt didſt breed,
Or that great Houſe of Gods celeſtial,
Which was begot in *Demogorgon*'s Hall,
And ſaw'ſt the Secrets of the World unmade.

Elyſian

Elyſian Landſcapes ſhine, expos'd to Day,
And yawning Chaſms the nether Shades diſplay.
Each Grove and ſable Stream our Eyes command,
Where *Acheron* excites the troubled Sand,
Where *Phlegethon* his fiery Torrent rolls,
And *Styx* the Paſſage of the Shades controuls.
I ſee their King, enthron'd in regal State;
Around the Miniſters of Torment wait;
I ſee the Conſort of infernal *Jove*,
And conſcious Bed of interdicted Love.
Death from an Eminence ſurveys the Throng
Of Ghoſts, and counts them as they paſs along:
Yet ſtill the greater Part, untold, remains,
And o'er increaſing Numbers *Pluto* reigns.
With Urn in Hand the *Cretan* Judge appears,
And Lives and Crimes with his Aſſeſſors hears:
The conſcious Wretch muſt all his Acts reveal,
Loath to confeſs, unable to conceal.
Let this ſuffice, (replies the *Theban* Sage)
O Guide, and Prop of my declining Age!
Little alas! it here avails to dwell
On theſe ſad Scenes, and paint the Woes of Hell.
How the fierce Centaur ſtill his Rage retains,
And Giants howl in Adamantine Chains.
To whom is the fallacious Stream unknown,
To whom the Toil of the returning Stone;

v. 757. *The* Cretan *Judge*] So *Virgil*:

Quæſitor Minos urnam movet: ille ſilentum
Conciliumque vocat, vitaſque et crimina diſcit.

v. 767. *The fallacious Stream*] The Crime of *Tantalus* is very well known, and for his Puniſhment he was placed up to his Chin in a pleaſant Stream, without being able to ſlake his Thirſt in it.

v. 768. *The Toil of the returning Stone*] *Siſyphus* was a noted Robber, ſlain by *Theſeus*. In Hell he is repreſented rolling a huge Stone up

The Pain that *Tityon*'s mangled Vitals feel,
And ſad *Ixion*'s revoluble Wheel?
Once, under *Hecate*'s auſpicious Care,
Myſelf explor'd thoſe Regions of Deſpair,
When in each Vein my Blood impetuous boil'd,
Nor Heav'n theſe darkſome Orbs of Light had ſpoil'd.
But rather ſtrive a cloſe Acceſs to gain
To our own *Theban*, and th' *Argolic* Train.
Of Milk four ſmall Libations will remove,
And force the reſt to quit the dreary Grove.
But mark attentive, as they paſs along,
The Features, Aſpect, Mien of either Throng.
Thy Eyes muſt here ſupply the Want of mine,
And teach me what the Fates and Heav'n deſign.
Swift as the Word, the ſpotleſs Nymph obeys,
And thrice repeats aloud her myſtic Lays;
Aw'd by the Sound, the Shades requir'd, appear,
While others fled, impell'd by ſudden Fear.
As *Circe* once, and fair *Medea* ſhone,
Now *Manto* ſhines, ſurpaſs'd in Guilt alone.
Again her liſt'ning Sire ſhe thus beſpake:
Agenor's Son firſt quits the bloody Lake;
With him appears the Partner of his Bed,
Two creſted Serpents hiſs on either's Head.

up a Hill, which rolling down again, affords him perpetual Trouble and Vexation.

v. 769. *The Pain*] *Tityon* made an Attempt to raviſh *Latona*, and fell by the Arrows of *Apollo*. He is deſcribed by the Poets with a Vulture perpetually gnawing his Liver.

v. 770. Ixion's *Wheel*] *Ixion*, boaſting that he had lain with *Juno*, was ſtruck down to Hell with a Thunderbolt, and chained to a Wheel, whoſe perpetual Rotation was a perpetual Source of Anguiſh and Torment.

A Troop

A Troop of Earth-born Youths, in Arms renown'd,
The wretched Pair with hideous Din ſurround.
The ſame Day's Sun, that, riſing, gave them Birth
Setting, reſtor'd them to their Mother Earth.
Fiercely they menace, fiercer yet engage,
And breathe Revenge, and unavailing Rage;
No more they ſeek Admittance to the Flood,
But wiſh to ſlake their Thirſt in mutual Blood.
The next in Order, as they paſs along,
Vary in Sex and Age, a mingled Throng.
Autonoe the firſt, is bath'd in Tears,
And *Semele* the Bolt, ſhe merits, fears,
With Eyes inverted, *Ino* ſhuns the Foe,
And preſſes to her Breaſt the Source of Woe.
Here ſad *Agave*, as her Senſe returns,
In penitential Weeds her *Pentheus* mourns;
She breaks her *Thyrſus*, bares her bloody Breaſt,
And flies to give his wand'ring Spirit Reſt.
Through *Styx* and ev'ry Lake above he flies,
And where th' impervious Cliffs of *Lethe* riſe;
His milder Sire, *Echion* there he found,
To ſhare his Griefs, and eaſe each rankling Wound.
A mournful Aſpect wretched *Lycus* wears,
And *Athamas* his ſlaughter'd Infant bears.

v. 799. *No more they*] The Flood he means here, was the Stream they contended about, and which, according to the Poet, was the ſole Cauſe of their Diſpute: though the Hints he has given are not ſufficient to entitle me to mention it in my Verſion.

v. 803. *Autonoe*] Was the Mother of *Actæon*.

v. 804. *And* Semele] See Note on the 365th Verſe of the Firſt Book.

v. 815. *A mournful Aſpect*] *Lycus*, according to the Commentator *Lactantius*, gave his Daughter *Megæra* in Marriage to *Hercules*. This ſo incenſed *Juno*, that ſhe made him a Lunatic; in one of his Fits he ſlew two of his Sons, for which Reaſon he is repreſented here dejected and ſorrowful.

Others

Actæon ſtill the Form impos'd retains,
And leads the Chace along the dreary Plains,
Fleet are his Limbs, o'er Hill and Dale he bounds,
And with his Horns repells the ruſhing Hounds.
Next *Niobe* majeſtic ſtalks along,
And ſhines conſpicuous in the Female Throng.
With Raptures ſhe recounts her former Woes,
Surveys th' exhauſted Malice of her Foes;
And, pleas'd to find herſelf ſecure in Death,
In loud Reproaches waſtes her impious Breath.
While thus the Prieſteſs ſpoke, the liſt'ning Sage
Uprears his hoary Head, depreſs'd with Age;
The Fillets tremble on his awful Brow,
And his flufh'd Cheeks with youthful Ardor glow:
No more the Staff his bending Frame ſuſtains,
Tall and erect, he ſtalks along the Plains,
And thus replies—O! waſte thy Breath no more,
The pitying Gods my raviſh'd Sight reſtore:

Others ſay, he was a *Theban* Exile, and made an Attempt to raviſh *Megæra* in the Abſence of her Huſband, who returned Time enough to prevent and puniſh his Deſigns with Death.

v. 834. *The pitying Gods*] This Fiction of the Poet is founded upon an important Truth of Religion, not unknown to the Pagans, that God only can open the Eyes of Men, and enable them to ſee what they cannot diſcover by their own Capacity. Thus *Homer* introduces *Minerva*, as enlightening the Eyes of *Diomede*,

Ἀχλὺν δ' ἀΐ τοι ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἕλον, ἣ πρὶν ἐπῆεν,
Ὄφρ' εὖ γινώσκῃς ἠμὲν θεὸν, ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα.

Iliad, Lib. 5. V. 127.

And *Milton* makes *Michael* open *Adam*'s Eyes to ſee the Revolutions of the World, and Fortunes of his Poſterity.

——— He purg'd with Euphraſy and Rue
The viſual Nerve, for he had much to ſee,
And from the Well of Life three Drops diſtill'd.

Parad. Loſt. B. 11.

The

The Miſts and Films that lately did involve
Theſe clouded Orbs, in ſubtle Air diſſolve.
I feel the gradual Entrance of the Light,
And ev'ry Object ſhines reveal'd to Sight.
With Eyes dejected, and diſſolv'd in Tears,
Each Phantom of *Argolic* Race appears.
Stern *Abas* here, there guilty *Prætus* ſtands,
And mild *Phoroneus* lifts his aged Hands.
See *Pelops*, maim'd to glut the Tyrant's Luſt,
And ſtern *Oenomaus*, begrim'd with Duſt.
In the pale Aſpect of each Patriot Shade
I ſee the Fall of *Argive* Pride pourtray'd.
But who are they, whoſe Wounds and gleaming Arms
Beſpeak them not diſus'd to War's Alarms?
An hoſtile Frown and threat'ning Looks they wear,
And to our View their wounded Boſoms bare.
Alas! too well I know the ſocial Band
For thoſe who fell beneath th' *Ætolian*'s Hand.
Chromis and *Phegeus*, ſkill'd to whirl the Lance,
And *Chthonius* with impetuous Strides advance:
Brave *Mæon* next his well known Face diſplays,
Mæon, diſtinguiſh'd with *Phœbean* Bays.
From whence this Rage? you tread no hoſtile Ground,
The Gods, not *Tydeus*, gave the fatal Wound:
Thus did the cruel Deſtinies ordain,
And human Strength and Art oppos'd in vain.

v. 845. *In the pale Aſpect*] This beautiful Circumſtance is taken from *Lucan*; where the Shade which *Eriſtho* raiſes to ſatisfy *Pompey*'s Son about the Fortune of the War; ſays,

—— Triſtis ſolidibus umbris
Vultus erat, vide Decios, natumque patremque
Luſtrales bellis animas, flentemque Camillum
Et Curios, Syllam de te, Fortuna, querentem. B. 6.

Mars

Mars ſhall again invade the *Theban* Shore,
And, in the Form of *Tydeus*, rage in Gore.
He ſpoke: And, pointing to the Blood above,
And ſacred Wreaths, the Phantoms backward drove.
But penſive *Laius* on the dreary Steep
Of hoarſe *Cocytos* eyes the ſubject Deep,
Whom late from Earth *Cylleneus* had convey'd,
And render'd back to Reſt his troubled Shade.
Unmov'd by Sacrifice, or hallow'd Blood,
He loiter'd on the Margin of the Flood,
And, as aſkance his Grandſon he beheld,
High in his Breaſt his Heart indignant ſwell'd.
Tireſias firſt the mutual Silence broke,
And, turning, thus th' impaſſive Shade beſpoke.
Illuſtrious Prince! ſince whoſe unworthy Fate,
Inceſſant Woes have vex'd the *Theban* State,
Here let thy Rage its utmoſt Barrier find,
Nor paſs the Bounds by Fate and Heav'n aſſign'd.
Enough of Vengeance to thy Wrongs is paid,
And fifty bleed, to glut a ſingle Shade.

v. 864. *And ſacred Wreaths*] The Verſes in the Original are

Dixit, vittâque ligatis
Frondibus inſtantes abigit, monſtratque cruorem.

Lactantius, with the uſual Warmth of a Critic, contends, that *vittaque ligatis frondibus* ſhould be referred to the fifty Shades; and I wiſh he had given us ſomething more to ſupport his Aſſertion, than his own bare Word and critical Authority; for I muſt own, I cannot eaſily conceive, why thoſe fifty Soldiers ſhould wear Chaplets appropriated to Prieſts and Augurs only. Beſides, Reaſon and the Context itſelf ſeem to perſuade a quite different Conſtruction, which is this, *that he drove them away by ſhowing them the Blood and his Wreaths, which were the Enſigns of his Office and Authority.* I would not be guilty of a poſitive *ipſe dixi*, but ſhall refer it to the Reader's own Judgment to determine between us.

This Deſcription of Necromancy in general, has a great Reſemblance with that in the 3d Act of *Seneca's Oedipus*.

Whom

Whom doſt thou fly?—thy Son, depriv'd of Sight,
And, buried to the World, abhors the Light:
What, tho' he ſtill retains his vital Breath,
His Pains exceed the worſt Degree of Death.
But ſay, by what Inducement led, you ſhun
A Congreſs with his unoffending Son?
O ſtay your Steps, and liſten to his Vows,
'Tis the laſt Interview that Heav'n allows.
The Lot of either warring Hoſt relate,
And be the juſt Interpreter of Fate;
If pleas'd, that we may ſhun the threatned Blow,
If angry, to afford the Cauſe of Woe.
So ſhall the grateful Veſſel waft thee o'er
To the ſweet Banks of yon forbidden Shore;
For thee the *Stygian* Monarch ſhall tranſgreſs
The Laws of Fate, and yield the wiſh'd Acceſs.
The Shade, relenting, ſteeps his paler Cheeks,
In the red Stream, and thus the Seer beſpeaks.
Ah! why am I ſelected to diſcloſe
The various Ills the Deſtinies impoſe?
Sufficient is it to have known the paſt,
And prov'd, that Death alone can bring the laſt.

v. 891. *If pleas'd*] I believe this Paſſage requires a little more Illuſtration than was allowable in the Verſion; the Senſe is, that by *Laius*'s relating the ill Fortune of the War (for we muſt carry the Suppoſition along with us of its being ſo) he would gain his Ends, however he was diſpoſed towards his Country; *viz.* that, if he was a Foe to it, he would have the Satisfaction of hearing them mourn; but, if a Friend, of warning them againſt the impending Danger.

I muſt confeſs myſelf obliged to *Lactantius* for the true Meaning and Interpretation of this Paſſage, and ſhould have been at a Loſs for a Conſtruction, as the Poet has expreſſed himſelf very obſcurely.

v. 893. *So ſhall the grateful Veſſel*] See Note on the 414th Verſe of the 1ſt Book.

But, would ye learn, what Woes on *Thebes* impend,
Let him, the Author at your Rites attend,
Who durſt his Father's Blood with Pleaſure ſhed,
Aſcend his Mother's interdicted Bed,
Thro' violated Nature force his Way,
And ſtain the ſacred Womb where once he lay.
E'en now the Pow'rs of Hell he ſtrives to rouſe
To Wrath, and wearies Heav'n with impious Vows.
But, ſince from me alone you ſeek to know
Each mournful Circumſtance of future Woe,
All I can learn, and all allow'd by Fate
With Truth and Accuracy I relate.
War, horrid War, the jarring World ſhall waſte,
And Thouſands to their own Deſtruction haſte;
Each *Grecian* State her youthful Warriors yields,
And ne'er before ſuch Armies hid the Fields.
All theſe ſhall meet a ſure, tho' various Death:
Some in the glorious Field ſhall yield their Breath,
And others, blaſted with etherial Fire,
Or, by the gaping Earth o'erwhelm'd, expire.
Fair *Thebes* ſhall yet be Miſtreſs of the Plain,
Nor *Polynices* win the promis'd Reign.
But the ſtern Sire ſhall triumph in Succeſs,
And Heav'n and Hell conſpire to give Redreſs.
Thus darkly he the Prophecy expreſt,
Part he diſclos'd, the greater Part ſuppreſt.
Mean while the ſcatter'd *Argives* bend their Courſe
To *Nemea*, conſcious of *Herculean* Force;
They long to burn, to ravage and deſtroy,
And War and Slaughter are their only Joy.

What Pow'r, O *Phœbus*, did avert their Rage,
(For ſcarce the Fame has reach'd our diſtant Age)
Relate, what God obſcur'd the doubtful Way,
And clog'd their promis'd Conqueſt with Delay?
The God of Wine, returning from the War,
From conquer'd *Hæmus* drove his rattling Car;
The *Scythian* here, what Time the Dog-Star reigns,
Nocturnal Orgies to the God ordains.
The Hills array'd in youthful Green appear,
And ſcarce ſuſtain the Produce of the Year.
To dearer *Thebes* the God purſues his Way,
And plies the Laſh, impatient of Delay:
Impetuous Lynxes bear him o'er the Plains
With Tigers pair'd, and lick the purple Reins;
Behind, a Troop of bleeding Wolves appear,
With wounded Bears, and cloſe the ſavage Rear.
Stern Diſcord, ever ready to engage,
With ſtagg'ring Impotence, and headſtrong Rage,

v. 933. *What Pow'r, O* Phœbus?] It was cuſtomary among the Epic Writers to renew their Invocation to the Muſes or *Phœbus* before the Recital of any remarkable Action or Exploit; nor does this Repetition want its Uſes: for it not only raiſes the Dignity and Importance of the Poem in the Eye of the Reader, but ſerves likewiſe to awake and revive his Attention to the Subject and Matter in Hand, as it would otherwiſe flag and fall off in the Courſe of a long Narration. *Virgil* has made uſe of this Addreſs in his 9th Book:

Quis Deus, O Muſæ, tam ſæva incendia Teucris
Avertit? *&c.* v. 77.

v. 934. *For ſcarce the Fame*] This is copied from *Virgil*, where in the Invocation previous to his Catalogue, he ſays

Et meminiſtis enim, Divae, et memorare poteſtis,
Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura. Æn. l. 7. v. 645.

And again by *Taſſo*:

——— Di tant' opra à noi ſi lunge
Debil' aura di fama pena giunga. Gier. Canto 3. St. 19.

Attend his Courſe, and crowd around his Car,
Friends of the God, and Partners in the War.
But, when he ſaw the Clouds of Duſt ariſe,
Their burniſh'd Armour gleaming in the Skies;
And knew, that *Thebes* as yet was unprepar'd
To dare the Combat, or their Rage retard;
Aſtoniſh'd at the View, he croſs'd the Road,
(Tho' gorg'd and reeling with the nauſeous Load)
Commands the Drums and ſhriller Fifes to ceaſe,
And thus begins, when all was huſh'd in Peace.
Behold! *Bellona* threats the *Theban* Tow'rs,
The Queen of *Æther* arms her *Argive* Pow'rs,
And from the long Records of diſtant Age
Derives Incitements to renew her Rage.
Could not th'Offender's Death, nor Length of Time
Abſolve the Guilt and Horrors of the Crime,
When Fire from Heav'n was ſummon'd to her Doom,
And ſcorch'd the Produce of her fertile Womb?
That her exhauſted Anger ſhe renews,
And the ſad Reliques of the Name purſues.
Yet will I interpoſe a ſhort Delay;
Hither, ye Friends of *Bacchus*, bend your Way.
He ſpoke: his Tigers, fleeter than the Wind,
Sprung forth, and bore him to the Spot deſign'd.
The gaudy Sun had gain'd the middle Height
Of Heav'n, and flaſh'd intolerable Light:
Each Grove admits th' exhilarating Ray,
And bares its dark Receſſes to the Day.
Thick Vapours iſſue from the ſteaming Fields,
As the cleft Earth a gradual Paſſage yields;

v. 965. *Could not th' Offender's Death*] This was his Mother *Semele*, concerning whom, ſee Note on Book the 1ſt, Verſe 356.

When

When, riſing from amidſt a circling Croud
Of *Naiads*, thus the God exclaims aloud.
Ye Nymphs, that o'er each Stream exert your Reign,
Partake our Honours, and adorn our Train,
Aſſiſt me to repel our common Foes,
Nor grudge the Toil, unwilling I impoſe.
Withhold your Sluices, dry the fertile Source,
And clog with Duſt each Stream's impetuous Courſe:
But *Nemea*'s moſt, from whence the guided Foe
Purſues his waſteful Path to *Thebes* below.
Let ev'ry Torrent quit its craggy Steep,
And diſembogue its Waters in the Deep.
Propitious *Phœbus* ſeconds our Deſigns,
As on the Margin of the Deep he ſhines;
The Signs indulgent to our Toils ariſe,
And the fierce Dog-ſtar fires th' autumnal Skies.
Hence to your liquid Caves awhile retire:
Your Preſence ſoon we ſhall again require,
When your paſt Toils ſhall claim an equal Share
In all the Rites our Votaries prepare.
No more the Fauns and Satyrs ſhall eſcape
Unpuniſh'd, or effect th' injurious Rape.
He ſpoke: and ſtrait a gath'ring Filth o'erſpreads,
And binds the Streams ſuſpended on their Heads:
No more the Spring its wonted Influence yields;
Increaſing Thirſt inflames the wither'd Fields.

v. 983. *Ye Nymphs*] From the Beginning of this Speech to the Concluſion of the Book, we ſhall find the Poet exerting himſelf in a very eminent Degree. The Deſcriptions are particularly picturesque and lively, the Sentiments noble and elevated, the Speeches nervous and ſpirited, the Diction daring and figurative, and the Verſes eaſy and harmonious.

Huge Heaps of moiſten'd Duſt condens'd to Mud
Charge the diſcolour'd Channel of the Flood.
Pale *Ceres* ſickens on the barren Soil,
And wither'd Ears elude the Peaſant's Toil.
The Flocks on the fallacious Margin ſtood,
And mourn th' unwonted Abſence of the Flood.
Thus, when the *Nile* ſuſpends his rapid Courſe,
And ſeeks with refluent Waves his diſtant Source;
In ſpacious Caves recruits his liquid Pow'rs,
And at each Mouth imbibes the wintry Show'rs:
The riven Earth with iſſuing Vapours ſmokes,
And *Egypt* long in vain his Aid invokes;
Till, at the World's united Pray'r, again
He ſpreads a golden Harveſt on the Plain.
Lyrceus, and the guilty *Lerna* fly
To diſtant Realms, and leave their Channels dry.
No more *Charadrus* with tumultuous Sound
Whirls his white Foam, and floating Rocks around.
With ſofter Murmurs rough *Aſterion* flows;
And *Eraſine* no more Confinement knows,
Who late in Sounds that match'd the noiſy Deep
Or Thunder, broke the Shepherd's envied Sleep.
Langia only, as the God ordain'd
Preſerves his Stream with Duſt and Filth unſtain'd;
Langia, yet unknown to vulgar Fame,
Nor glorying in the ſlaughter'd Infant's Name.
Inviolate the Grove and Spring remain,
And all their wonted Properties retain.

v. 1013. *Thus when the Nile*] This Compariſon is drawn agreeably to Truth and the general Obſervation of Travellers. The beſt Comment upon it is in the 10th Book of *Lucan's Pharſalia*, where the Poet introduces a Dialogue between *Cæſar* and *Achoreus* concerning the Source and Origin of the *Nile*.

But

But O! what Honours the fair Nymph await,
When *Greece*, to ſolemnize her Infant's Fate,
Shall inſtitute triennial Feaſts and Games,
And Ages hence record their ſacred Names.
No more the Plates their ſwelling Cheſts confine,
No more the Bucklers on their Shoulders ſhine:
The Fever ſpreads thro' each interior Part,
And from the Mouth invades the beating Heart.
With raging Pain their with'ring Entrails burn,
And fi'ry Breathings from their Lungs return.
The ſhrinking Veins contract their purple Flood,
Nor feel the circling Motion of the Blood.
The gaping Earth exhales unwholſome Steams,
Reſolv'd to Duſt by *Sol*'s increaſing Beams.
The thirſty Steed, impatient of the Reins,
In wild Diſorder ſcours along the Plains.

v. 1035. *O! what Honours*] A Gentleman, who has made ſome Figure in the literary World, in peruſing theſe Lines with me, blamed our Author for giving us the Outlines of this Piece, which he intended to fill up in the 6th Book, as thinking it ſuperfluous and diſguſting. Perhaps however this may be ſo far from cloying the Reader's Appetite, that it may raiſe it, and make him deſirous of ſeeing the Picture drawn in its full Length.

v. 1053. *The thirſty Steed*] Theſe Lines call to my Mind a beautiful Deſcription in *Lucan*, of this noble Animal in the ſame ſickly State.

——— Non ſonipes motus clangore tubarum
Saxa quatit pulſu, rigidos vexantia frænos
Ora terens, ſpargitque jubas, et ſurrigit aures,
Incertoque pedum pugnat non ſtare tumultu.
Feſſa jacet cervix. Fumant ſudoribus armi:
Oraque projectâ ſqualent arentia linguâ.
Pectora rauca gemunt, quæ creber anhelitus urget:
Et defecta gravis longe trahit ilia pulſus:
Siccaque ſanguineis dureſcit ſpuma lupatis. *Pharſ.* B. 4. 742.

On the dry Bit no Floods of Moiſture flow,
In Whiteneſs equal to the *Scythian* Snow;
But from his Mouth depends the lolling Tongue,
Or to the parched Root adheſive hung.
Some, by the King commiſſion'd, Earth explore,
And ſearch the Sources of her liquid Store.
But all in vain: they view with wond'ring Eyes,
Each Channel dry'd, exhauſted of Supplies,
(Th' eſſential Property of Moiſture gone)
The Spring retains an empty Name alone.
Nor was there greater Hope of falling Rain,
Than if they rang'd the deſart *Lybian* Plain,
Where *Iris* ever ſhuns the deep Serene,
Nor pregnant Clouds o'erſhade th' unvaried Scene.
At Length a Ray of Hope diſpels their Grief,
And chears them with the Proſpect of Relief.
Hypſipile, as through the Woods they ſtray'd,
A beauteous Mourner, haply they ſurvey'd.
Opheltes, in her ſoft Embraces preſt,
(Another's Hope) hung ſmiling at her Breaſt.
With graceful Negligence her Treſſes flow;
Her humble Weeds were ſuited to her Woe;

Taſſo has a fine Stanza on the ſame Subject.

Langue il Corſier già sì feroce, e l' erba
Che fù ſuo caro cibo, à ſchiffo prende,
Vacilla il piede infermo, e la ſuperba
Cervice dianzi, or giù dimeſſa pende;
Memoria di ſue palme or più non ſerba,
Ne più nobil di gloria amor l' accende:
Le vincitrici ſpoglie, e i richi fregi
Par, che quaſi vil ſoma, odij, e diſpregi. Canto 13. St. 64.

v. 1069. *Opheltes*] Was the Son of *Lycurgus*, King of *Nemea*. His Name comprehends the Prediction of his Death by a Serpent Ὄφις, ſignifying a Serpent, and Ἔλω, which makes Ἔλον in its Aoriſt Secund. to kill.

Yet

Yet all thoſe ſtudied Arts could not efface
Her native Grandeur, and majeſtic Grace:
With decent Mixture in her ſtately Mien
The Captive and the Princeſs might be ſeen.
Th' *Inachian* Monarch firſt his Silence broke,
And aw'd, the Royal Exile thus beſpoke.
O thou, whoſe Features and celeſtial Air
A more than mortal Origin declare;
Whom native Heav'n, and boundleſs Pow'r ſecure
From all thoſe Wants the Sons of Earth endure:
Let not an humble Suppliant ſue in vain,
Whether you left the chaſte *Diana*'s Train,
To grace a Mortal's, or Immortal's Arms,
(For *Jove* himſelf has pin'd for *Argive* Charms)
The Squadrons you ſurvey, a pious Cauſe
To raze the guilty Walls of *Cadmus* draws:
Yet fiery Thirſt our juſt Deſigns controuls,
Conſumes our Vigour and unmans our Souls.
Whate'er you grant, with Joy we ſhall partake,
Nor ſcorn the troubled Stream, or ſtanding Lake:
Our preſſing Wants forbid us to refuſe,
Nor leave as yet the Liberty to chooſe.
No more we importune the Pow'rs on high;
Do thou the Place of partial *Jove* ſupply;

v. 1079. *O thou*] The firſt Part of this Addreſs is a Tranſcript of *Æneas*'s Speech to his Mother *Venus*, in the firſt Æneid.

O (quam te memorem!) Virgo: namque haud tibi vultus
Mortalis, nec vox hominem ſonat: O Dea, certe:
An Phœbi ſoror, ac nympharum ſanguinis una?
Sis felix, noſtrumque leves quæcunque laborem: Ver. 331.

v. 1095. *No more we importune*] I am afraid *Statius* has neglected *Horace*'s Advice,

—— Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto proceſſerit, et ſibi conſtet.

O give us Strength to match our warm Deſires,
And Nerves to ſecond what our Soul inſpires.
So may this Infant thrive beneath the Care
Of Heav'n, and long inhale the vital Air.
Yet more.—Should *Jove* our Vows with Conqueſt crown,
And *Thebes* her rightful Lord and Monarch own;
For each that ſcapes the ruthleſs Hand of Death,
A ſlaughter'd Victim ſhall reſign his Breath.
He ſpoke: a ſudden Languor ſeiz'd his Tongue,
Inactive to the clammy Jaws it hung,
His Lungs no more their wonted Aid ſupply,
And fault'ring in their Courſe the Accents die.
Pale was each Face with Thirſt and with Deſpair,
Fainty they heave for Breath and gaſp for Air.
The *Lemnian* Princeſs fix'd her modeſt Eyes
Prone to the Ground, and thus at length replies.
'Tis true, O *Greeks*, from Heav'n I claim my Birth,
And far in Woe ſurpaſs the Race of Earth.
Hard is my Lot a Nurſe's Cares to prove,
And tend the Produce of another's Love;

At leaſt *Adraſtus* ſeems to deviate from the pious Track he firſt ſet out in. The Sentiment is originally *Lucan*'s, and I am ſorry our Author had the Indiſcretion to copy it,

> Mentimur regnare Jovem, ſpectabit ab alto
> Æthere Theſſalicas, teneat cum fulmina, cædes?
> Scilicet ipſe petit Pholoen? petit ignibus Æten,
> Immeritæque nemus Rhodopes, pinuſque minantem?
> Cæſſius hoc feriet potius caput? (*Speaking of* Cæſar.)
> *Pharſ.* Lib. 7.

The Lines themſelves are ſpirited and beautiful, and equally impious.

v. 1113. *From Heav'n*] She was the Grandaughter of *Bacchus* by her Father *Thoas*'s Side.

v. 1116. *Of another's Love*] *Archemorus* or *Opheltes*.

While

While mine, perchance, the Pangs of Hunger know,
And crave what on an Alien I beſtow.
Yet for the Author of my Birth I claim,
A Monarch great in Empire as in Fame.
But, why do I delay to give Redreſs,
And aggravate with Converſe your Diſtreſs?
Come then, if haply yet *Langia* glides,
And rolls beneath the Ground his ſilent Tides.
Ne'er was he known to leave his Channel dry,
Not e'en when *Sirius* fires the ſultry Sky?
Or *Cancer* on his utmoſt Limit ſhines,
And to the ſcorching Lion near inclines.
She ſpoke: and, to procure the promis'd Aid,
In Haſte her Charge on the ſoft Herbage laid.
Then heap'd around the choiceſt Flow'rs, and tries
With lulling Sounds to cloſe his ſtreaming Eyes.
Such as great *Cybele*, when erſt ſhe ſtrove
To ſoothe the plaintive Cries of new-born *Jove*;
Around the Babe in antic Meaſures paſs
Her jovial Prieſts, and ſtrike the tinkling Braſs;
But ſtrike in vain: the Cymbal's feeble Sound,
Is in the Infant's louder Clamors drown'd.
Meanwhile in childiſh Sports *Opheltes* paſt
The fatal Day, of all his Days the laſt.
Onewhile the riſing Blades of Graſs he ſpurns,
Then, as his Thirſt, or Luſt of Food returns,

v. 1117. *While mine*] She had Twins, named *Thoas* and *Eunæus*, by *Jaſon*.

v. 1133. *Such as great* Cybele] *Cybele*, or the Earth, was the Mother of all the other Deities. Her Sacrifices were celebrated with a confuſed Noiſe of Timbrels, Pipes, and Cymbals. Hence *Horace* ſays,

——— Non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra.

Recalls

Recalls his abſent Nurſe with feeble Cries,
Or ſeeks in Sleep to cloſe his heavy Eyes:
To form the Speech of Man he now eſſays,
And harmleſs Thoughts in broken Sounds conveys;
Erects his liſt'ning Ears at ev'ry Sound,
And culls the tender Flow'rs that grow around:
Too credulous to the fallacious Grove,
Nor conſcious of the Fate decreed by *Jove*.
Thus *Mars* on *Thracian* Mountains topt with Snow,
Or *Hermes* rang'd along *Cyllene*'s Brow.
Thus often, on his native Shore reclin'd,
Apollo lay, and youthful Thefts deſign'd.
The Troops meanwhile, impatient of Delay,
Thro' Shades and devious Thickets force their Way:
One follows, where his fair Conductreſs leads,
Another, urg'd with greater Thirſt precedes;
While ſhe repeated, as ſhe paſt along,
Her Promiſes, and chear'd the drooping Throng:
Soon as the rocky Murmur greets their Ears,
And in full View the grateful Vale appears;
A Stream, the leading Chief exclaims aloud,
And waves the Standard o'er the joyful Crowd;

v. 1161. *Soon as the rocky Murmur*] This is taken from the third Æneid of *Virgil*.

Cum procul obſcuros colles, humilemque videmus
Italiam, Italiam primus conclamat Achates,
Italiam læto ſocii clamore ſalutant. Verſe 523.

And again by *Taſſo*,

Ecco apparir Gieruſalem ſi vede,
Ecco ſcoprir Gieruſalem ſi ſcorge;
Ecco da mille voci unitamente
Gieruſalemme ſalutar ſi vede. Canto 3. Stanza 3.

A Stream,

A Stream, at once Ten Thouſand Voices cry,
A Stream, the liſt'ning Hills and Rocks reply.
Thus, when the Pilot on th' *Ionian* Main
Diſcerns the Summit of *Apollo*'s Fane,
The ſturdy Boatman quits awhile his Oar,
And hails with joyful Shouts the liſt'ning Shore,
The liſt'ning Shore returns the deaf'ning Sound,
The Rocks remurmur, and the Deeps rebound.
Eager to drink, the ruſhing Crouds deſcend,
Unmindful of their Sov'reign or their Friend.
Horſes and Charioteers, a mingled Throng,
Steed preſs'd on Steed, and Man drove Man along.
Here Kings themſelves in vain Precedence claim,
In Rank ſuperior, yet their Thirſt the ſame.
Some tumble headlong from the ſlipp'ry Rock,
Others are whelm'd beneath the wat'ry Shock.

v. 1168. *The Summit of* Apollo's *Fane*] *Leucas* was a Town in the Iſle *Leucadia* in the *Ionian* Sea, now called *Santa Maura*, famous for the Temple of *Apollo*, to which thoſe that were love-ſick reſorted, and were cured; *Ovid* deſcribes it thus:

——— Quoniam non ignibus æquis
Ureris, Ambracias terra petenda tibi.
Phœbus ab excelſo, quantum patet, aſpicit æquor.
Actiacum populi Leucadiumque vocant.
Heroid. *Sap.* to *Phaon.*

As for the Simile, *Taſſo* has copied it.

Così di Naviganti audace ſtuolo,
Che mova à ricercar' eſtranio Lido,
E in Mar dubbioſo ſotto ignoto Polo
Provi l'onde fallaci, e'l vento infido;
S'al fin diſcopre il deſiato ſuolo,
Il ſaluta da lunge in lieto grido,
E l'uno al' altro il moſtra, e in tanto oblia
La noia, e'l mal della paſſata via. Canto 3. St. 4.

The

The King, to whom before a Million bow'd,
Finds not a Subject in the num'rous Crowd.
E'en ſinking Friendſhip meets with no Return
Of Aid, while each becomes his own Concern.
The Stream, whoſe Surface late was known to ſhow,
Clear as a Glaſs the ſhining Sands below,
Obſcene with Filth and gather'd Mud appears;
And a diſcolour'd, ſable Aſpect wears.
The flatted Graſs avows their heavy Tread,
And bending *Ceres* hangs her drooping Head:
Their Thirſt no Bounds; and no Diſtinction knows,
The more they drink, the more the Fever glows.
Such is the Proſpect, when, o'erthrown the Wall,
Bellona dooms a captive Town to fall:
Vulcan and *Mars* with mutual Aid engage,
And all is Tumult, Ruin, Blood and Rage.
At length a Chief, as in the Midſt he ſtood,
Thus gratefully beſpoke the liſt'ning Wood;
O thou, whoſe verdant Shades, and envied Grove,
Can boaſt alone the Patronage of *Jove*,
Here let thy Wrath its utmoſt Limits know,
Nor paſs the Bounds which Heav'n and Fate allow.
Not greater was thy Vengeance, when of old
Alcides ſlew the Terror of the Fold,
When in his fatal Gripe the Hero preſt
The Throat and Windpipe of the Savage Peſt.
And thou, diſpenſing Genius of the Stream,
Impervious to the Sun's Meridian Beam,
Still calm, uninterrupted may'ſt thou range,
And from ſucceeding Ages feel no Change.
Thy Channels no Increaſe from Seaſons knows,
From dropping Zephyrs and diſſolving Snows;

Nor

Nor *Iris*, varied by *Phœbean* Beams,
Refunds the Property of other Streams:
From thy own Source recruited with Supplies,
Nor varied by each Star that rules the Skies.
Lycormas ſhall in vain Precedence claim,
And *Ladon*, ſacred to *Apollo*'s Name:
Sperchius ſhall reſign his Share of Praiſe,
And *Xanthus*, favour'd in *Mæonian* Lays.
But greater Marks of Favour ſhalt thou prove,
And ſhine in votive Honours next to *Jove*;
Full in the Shade of theſe encircling Bow'rs,
Shall riſe an Altar, grac'd with native Flow'rs:
So thou but open at our next Return
The liquid Treaſures of thy ſacred Urn,
So thus our waſted Strength again reſtore,
And hail us to this hoſpitable Shore.

v. 1213. *Nor* Iris] The Poet ſeems to have fancied, the Rainbow drew up Water from the Sea or Rivers, and poured it down again in Showers of Rain: So *Lucan*:

Arcus ——— ———
Oceanum bibit, raptoſque ad nubila fluctus
Pertulit, et cœlo defuſum reddidit æquor.

Of all the Books of the *Thebaid*, there is none more pleaſing than the fourth. It may be divided into three Parts, each of which has its particular Beauties, and claims a diſtinct Share of Admiration. The firſt Part, which comprehends an Account of the warlike Preparation at *Argos*, and a Deſcription of the Troops and Commanders of the confederate Army, is wonderfully entertaining. The ſecond Part, which contains a Deſcription of the whole Art of Necromancy, the Government and different Compartments of the infernal Regions, and a ſuccinct Account of the moſt celebrated Perſonages before the *Theban* War, is extremely inſtructive. The third and laſt Part, which is the Introduction to an Epiſode, contains a fine Piece of Machinery in the Diſtreſs of the Allies, and is a Mixture of Inſtruction and Entertainment. In a Word, in whatever Light we contemplate it, we ſhall find it one of the moſt correct, diverſified and ſpirited Books in the whole Poem.

END of BOOK IV.

THE

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

AFTER the Confederates had refreſhed themſelves at the River Langia, Hypſipyle, *at the Requeſt of* Adraſtus, *relates her Misfortunes, and in particular, deſcribes the famous Maſſacre of the Males, the Deliverance of her Father, the Arrival and Amours of the* Argonauts *at* Lemnos, *and her Abdication of the Government. In the mean Time,* Archemorus, *whom ſhe had left behind, is ſlain by a Serpent dedicated to* Jupiter. Hypſipyle, *alarmed with the Screams of the dying Infant, leaves the Army, and is followed by* Parthenopæus, *whom* Adraſtus *had ſent to know the Cauſe of her Departure. As ſoon as the Allies are acquainted with what had happened, they march with* Parthenopæus *to deſtroy the Serpent.* Hippomedon *makes an unſucceſsful Attempt with a huge Stone, and* Capaneus *kills the Monſter with his Spear.* Jupiter, *enraged at this, ſcarcely refrains from puniſhing the Hero with a Thunder-bolt, and, as a Token of his Diſpleaſure, darts down a Flaſh of Lightning, which falls upon his Helmet.* Hypſipyle *makes a Lamentation over the Infant's Body.* Lycurgus *makes an Attempt to ſlay her, but is withheld by* Tydeus. *This occaſions a Riot, which is however quelled by the Interpoſition of* Amphiaraus, *who perſuades the Army to do funeral Honours to* Archemorus *in an Oration, which concludes this Book.*

THE THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

THEIR Thirſt allay'd, and fervent Heat of Blood,
The joyful Legions quit the ſhallower Flood.
Recruited with the Draught, the gen'rous Steed
With louder Neighings ſeeks the verdant Mead.
As now returning Health diſpers'd the Pain,
And luſty Vigour ſtrung their Nerves again;
Th' exulting Troops with fiercer Ardor glow;
And threat and vow Deſtruction to the Foe;
As if ſome hidden Virtue in the Stream
Renew'd their Courage and extinguiſh'd Flame.
Again the Warriors, gath'ring from afar,
Move into Ranks, and wear the Form of War;
Again each Chief his ſcatter'd Forces joins,
Gleams in the Front, and forms the deep'ning Lines.
As Light'nings iſſue from a ſable Cloud,
Such from their Arms the bright Effulgence flow'd.
Thus, Spring returning, from the ſultry Coaſt
Of *Nile*, the Cranes, a thick-embodied Hoſt,

v. 17. *Thus, Spring returning*] This Compariſon ſeems to have been a Favourite among the Poets. *Homer* firſt adopted it.

Ηΰτε περ κλαγγὴ γεράνων πέλει ουρανόθι πρὸ,
Αἵτ' ἐπεὶ ὄν χειμῶνα φύγον, καὶ ἀθέσφατον ὄμβρον,
Κλαγγῇ ται γε πέτονται ἐπ' Ὠκεανοῖο ῥοάων,

Expand their Wings, and with hoarſe Clangors fly
To milder Climes, and a more temp'rate Sky.
Their length'ning Squadrons ſhade the Plain below,
Loud and more loud the piercing Clangors grow;
Till to ſome running Stream they bend their Way,
Or baſk beneath the Sun's deſcending Ray.
Amidſt his circling Peers *Adraſtus* ſtood
Beneath an Aſh, the Glory of the Wood;
And, on the *Theban* Hero's Lance reclin'd,
Thus to the *Lemnian* Queen reveal'd his Mind.
Whoe'er thou art, to whom theſe Squadrons owe
Their Lives, O! make us Partners of thy Woe.
Honours like theſe th' imperial Lord of Air,
And all th' etherial Hoſt might wiſh to ſhare:
Fain would we learn, what happy Spot of Earth
Can boaſt your Reſidence and whence your Birth!
Tho' Fortune frowns, impartial Heav'n exerts
Her Arm of Succour, and your Cauſe aſſerts!
Bred in that Air, and Dignity we trace
The Rank and hidden Glories of your Race.
The Princeſs bends awhile on Earth her Eyes,
And her Relation uſhers in with Sighs.

Ἀνδράσι Πυγμαίοισι φόνου κῆρα φέρουσαι·
Αἰόλιαι δ' ἄρα ταί γε κακὴν ἔριδα προφέρονται.

Virgil borrowed it from him.

Quales ſub nubibus atris
Strymoniæ dant ſigna grues, atque æthera tranant
Cum ſonitu, fugiuntque notos clamore ſecundo.

Tryphiodorus has imitated it likewiſe.

Οἷαι δ' ἀφραιοῖο μέτηλυδες ὠκεανοῖο
Χείματος ἀμφὶ πολοῖ, γεράνων τίχες ἠεροφώιαι,
Κυκλον ἐποχμεύουσιν ἀλήμονες ὀρχηθμοῖο,
Γειοπόροις ἀρότησιν ἀπείχθεα κεκλήγοντες. Deſ. of Troy, V. 343.

The

The odious Taſk, O Monarch, you impoſe,
Renews alas! unutterable Woes:
Say, conſcious *Lemnos*, how ſhall I relate
Thy Scenes of Carnage and thy Deeds of Hate?
Again the daring Crime appears in Sight,
And all the Horrors of the fatal Night.
Thrice hapleſs they, whoſe Breaſts the Furies fir'd,
And in whoſe Hearts this impious Rage inſpir'd!
'Twas I, and I alone, who durſt conceal
My Sire, devoted to the ruthleſs Steel.
Let not my ſimple Weeds and ſordid Veſt
Perſuade you to deſpiſe your friendly Gueſt.
But why do I divert with theſe Delays
The Cares of War, and military Praiſe?
Know then, from *Thoas*, great in Arms, I ſpring,
Tho' flying from the Chains of *Nemea*'s King.
The beauteous Mourner riſes in Eſteem,
Her Talents equal to the Labour ſeem.
All wiſh to know the Sequel of her Woes,
But chief *Adraſtus* urg'd her to diſcloſe.
While theſe our Troops unite their common Aid
To force a Paſſage thro' yon gloomy Shade,

v. 41. *The odious Taſk*] The Length of this Narration is abundantly compenſated for by the Beauties of it. The Poet ſeems to avow his Intention of imitating *Virgil* in his ſecond Book, by uſhering it in with almoſt the ſame Terms.

—— Immania vulnera, rector,
Integrare jubes ——

v. 61. *While theſe our Troops*] It ſometimes happens (ſays *Longinus*) that a Writer, in ſpeaking of ſome Perſon, all on a ſudden puts himſelf in that other's Place, and acts his Part; a Figure which marks the Impetuoſity and Hurry of the Paſſions. The Poet ſtops his Narration, forgets his own Perſon, and inſtantly, without any Notice, introduces the Perſon ſpeaking. By this ſudden Tranſition

Nor does the Taſk require a little Force,
(So thick the Buſhes that obſtruct their Courſe)
Each Circumſtance of Woe relate anew,
And from the Cauſe the dire Effect purſue:
What follow'd your Averſion to the Crime,
And why ſecluded from your native Clime.
'Tis pleaſant to review the Scenes of Grief,
And to divulge our Woes a ſhort Relief.
He paus'd: the captive Princeſs thus replies;
Encircled by the Deep fair *Lemnos* lies;
Here weary *Vulcan* waſtes his leiſure Hours,
And recollects in Sleep his ſcatter'd Pow'rs.
The Cloud-capt *Athos* from his length'ning Steep
O'erlooks our Iſle; his Groves o'erſhade the Deep.
Each fronting Tract of Land the *Thracian* plows,
The *Thracian*, fatal to each *Lemnian* Spouſe.
Once great in Arms and uſeful Arts it ſhone,
Fertile in Chiefs of Valour and Renown:
Not *Delos*, or the *Samian* Iſle could claim
A greater Share of Riches and of Fame;
Till Heav'n to puniſh our Offence decreed,
Nor were we wanting to promote the Deed:

he prevents the Reader, and the Tranſition is made before the Poet himſelf ſeems ſenſible he had made it. The true and proper Place for this Figure is when the Time preſſes, and the Occaſion will not admit of any Delay: It is elegant then to paſs from one Perſon to another, as in that of *Hecataeus*.

"The Herald, extremely diſcontented at the Orders he had received, gave Command to the *Heraclidæ* to withdraw. —— It is "no Way in my Power to help you; if, therefore, you would not "entirely periſh, and if you would not involve me too in your "Ruin, depart and ſeek a Retreat among ſome other People."

Treatiſe on the Sublime, Cap. 3.

No Temples to the Queen of Love were rais'd,
Nor Incenſe on the ſacred Altars blaz'd.
Thus ſometimes Anger ſtings a heav'nly Mind,
And Vengeance ſure, tho' tardy, creeps behind.
From *Paphos*, where a hundred Altars ſmoke,
And love-ſick Votaries her Aid invoke,
Careleſs of Dreſs and Ornament ſhe moves,
And leaves behind her Ceſtus and her Doves.
The Moon had meaſur'd half the ſtarry Frame,
When the fierce Goddeſs with the Furies came:
Far other Flames, than thoſe of Love ſhe bears,
And high in Air the Torch of Diſcord rears.
Soon as the Fiend-engendred Serpents roam,
Diffuſing Terrors o'er each wrangling Dome,
The Loves, or willing, or compell'd by Force,
From guilty *Lemnos* bend their airy Courſe;
Lemnos, which dearer to her Conſort ſtands
Than all the Cities rear'd by mortal Hands.

v. 92. *Her Ceſtus*] The Ceſtus or magic Girdle of *Venus* is thus deſcribed by *Homer*.

——Ἔνθα δέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο,
Ἔνθ' ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ' ἵμερος, ἐν δ' ὀαριστὺς,
Πάρφασις, ἥ τ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.

There is a ſingular Propriety in making this Goddeſs the Authoreſs of theſe Diſturbances: the Machine is allegorical, and implies, that the *Lemnian* Matrons were excited to ſuch a Degree of Luſt, as to maſſacre their Huſbands for their natural Impoteney, or affected Continence.

v. 101. *Lemnos*] The Reaſon why *Vulcan* is ſaid to reſide at *Lemnos*, was, becauſe that Iſland abounds with ſubterraneous Veins of Fire. He fell there from Heaven, as he himſelf ſays.

Παὶν δ' ἦμαρ φερόμην, ἅμα δ' ἠελίῳ καταδύντι
Κάππεσον ἐν Λήμνῳ. —— Hom. Iliad. B. 1.

Where Philoſophers ſay, that Element has its proper Place. Here it was, that he contrived the famous Chain, which poſſibly might prejudice his Conſort againſt the *Lemnians*.

Urg'd by no Cauſe, the ſullen Bridegroom fled
From blooming Beauty, and the genial Bed;
No more he pays the pleaſing Debt of Love,
When conſcious *Cynthia* rules the Realms above:
Nor Sleep ſurprizes with unnotic'd Pace
The claſping Pair, and ſtrengthens their Embrace:
But Rage and Hate in every Breaſt ariſe,
And with his Torch inverted *Hymen* flies.
The Men (a Plea for Abſence) oft complain
Of *Thracian* Inſults, and demand the Plain:
And tho' from Camp their Eyes with Eaſe command
Their native City, and the *Lemnian* Strand,
Tho' Nature, oft recoiling, chides their Stay,
And their ſad Children beckon them away;
Stretch'd on the Banks, they rather wiſh to bear
The wintry Storm, th' Inclemencies of Air,
And liſten to the hoarſe-reſounding Roar
Of nightly Surges, breaking on the Shore.
Our Sex in ſocial Converſe ſeek Relief,
And point to *Thrace*, the Object of their Grief;
From Morn to Night the Stream of Sorrow flows,
And *Sol* but ſets to riſe upon their Woes.
How bleſt was I, a Stranger then to Love,
And all the Pangs, which widow'd Matrons prove.
Now thro' the Zenith flaming *Sol* had driv'n
His panting Steeds, and gain'd the middle Heav'n,
When, tho' no gath'ring Clouds the Day controul
Thro' Skies ſerene portentous Thunders roll;

v. 129. *When tho' no gath'ring Clouds*] This was looked upon by the Ancients as very ominous: Hence *Lucan* enumerating the Prodigies previous to the Civil War between *Cæſar* and *Pompey*, ſays,

——Tacitum ſine nubibus ullis
Fulmen, —— *Pharſ. Lib.* 1.

And

The Caverns of the ſmoky God diſplay
Thick-ſteaming Flames, and choak the Face of Day:
Tho' mute each Blaſt, the rough *Ægean* roars,
And heavy Surges laſh the plaintive Shores:
Then grave *Polyxo* thro' the City roves,
And mourns her widow'd Bed and ſlighted Loves.
Mad as the *Thracian* Bacchanal appears,
When from afar the vocal Pipe ſhe hears,
Evoe ſhe cries, and ſhakes the ſolid Ground,
While ecchoing Mountains anſwer to the Sound.
Fluſh'd are her Cheeks, and haggard roll her Eyes,
She rends the deſart Town with frantic Cries,
And, while the Gates reſound beneath her Strokes,
To join in Aid th' aſſembling Dames invokes.

And *Horace* mentions it as a Warning ſent from Heaven, to deter him from continuing his former irreligious Courſe of Life.

——— Dieſpiter
Igni coruſco nubila dividens,
Plerumque per purum ſonantes
Egit equos, volucremque currum. *Lib.* 1. *Ode* 34.

v. 137. *Mad as the* Thracian *Bacchanal*] *Virgil* has made Choice of the ſame Compariſon to expreſs the Rage and Madneſs of *Dido*, when *Æneas* was going to forſake her.

Sævit inops animi, totamque incenſa per urbem
Bacchatur: qualis commotis excita ſacris
Thyas, ubi audito ſtimulant trieterica Baccho
Orgia, nocturnusque vocat clamore Cithæron.
Æneid Lib. 4. *V.* 300.

And *Tryphidorus* likewiſe.

Οὐκ' ἄτω Θρήισσαι ἐνὶ δρυμοῖσι γυναῖκα
Νώδυμος αὐλὸς ἐτυψεν ὀρειμανὲος Διονυσε,
Ἥτι θέω τύφθεῖσα παρ' ὄρεϊ ὅμμα τιταίνει,
Γυμνὸν ἐπισείουσα κάρη κυκλάμπυκι κισσῳ.

What he mentions of the *Bacchanal's* being rouſed to Fury by the Pipe, is confirmed by *Apuleius*. *Evantes exiliunt lucitante tibiâ lymphaticum tripudium. Metam. Lib.* 8.

Four death-devoted Babes, (ſad Scene of Grief;)
Hung at her Side, and ſought to give Relief.
Swift as our Leader, to *Minerva*'s Fane
We bend our Courſe, a wild diſorder'd Train.
Silence enjoin'd, with Confidence aroſe
The daring Authoreſs of all our Woes;
Her better Hand a naked Dagger preſs'd,
And thus her Speech the wrathful Fair addreſs'd.
Ye *Lemnian* Dames, diſſolv'd in barren Eaſe,
If *Venus* yet retains the Pow'r to pleaſe;
If empty Marriage-Forms ye diſapprove,
And hate the Name without the Joys of Love;
Hear and attend: when Fortune points the Way,
And Heav'n inſpires, 'tis impious to delay:
To Vengeance riſe; nor let your Sex be known
By Want of Courage, but by Form alone.
Yet *Hymen*'s Privilege we may regain,
And Love and genial Joys revive again,
Would each the Toil with juſt Diviſion ſhare,
And join her private with the public Care.
Three Years have paſt, ſince each deſerted Bride
Has loſt the ſullen Partner of her Side:
No more each Debt of Love and Duty's paid,
No more *Lucina* yields her timely Aid.
Prompted by Nature, and by Love inclin'd,
The Fiſhes, Birds, and Beaſts increaſe their Kind.
Stern *Danaus* his Progeny could rouſe
To Vengeance for the Breach of Marriage-Vows,
And, unreſtrain'd with Fears, diſmiſs the Foe,
In Dreams of Terror, to the Shades below:
But we, a worthleſs, ſervile, heartleſs Train,
Had rather brook tyrannic *Hymen*'s Chain.

Yet ſhould theſe old Examples fail to move
Your juſt Revenge of alienated Love;
Copy the *Thracian* Dame, who durſt explore;
Her Spouſe's Heart, and drink the ruſhing Gore.
Each Doubt, and each Objection to remove,
Myſelf will firſt the guilty Labour prove.
Four Babes, the Boaſt and Solace of their Sire,
Shall firſt beneath the ruthleſs Sword expire:
Nor ſhall their Blandiſhments a Reſpite gain,
But interpoſing Nature plead in vain:
While yet they breathe, the Author of their Birth
Shall crown the Heap, and ſtain the loaded Earth.
What Heroine dares thus far in Guilt engage,
And ſecond my Deſign with equal Rage?
Mean while the *Lemnian* Fleet, in all the Pride
Of ſwelling Canvaſs, cleaves the yielding Tide.
This with pleas'd Eyes the fierce *Polyxo* view'd,
And thus in Height of Joy her Theme purſu'd.
When Fortune calls, what farther can detain,
And ſhall the Gods afford their Aid in vain.
Our Foes advance, impell'd by adverſe Fate,
To ſtain the Sword, and glut in Death our Hate.
Late ſlighted *Venus* in a Dream appear'd,
And o'er my Head a naked Falchion rear'd.

v. 181. *Each Doubt,*] *Cæſar* has Recourſe to the ſame Argument, in Order to perſuade his Soldiers to cut down the ſacred Grove of *Maſſylia*, after he had given the firſt Stroke himſelf.

Jam ne quis veſtrûm dubitet ſubvertere ſylvam
Credite me feciſſe nefas. *Lib.* 3. *V.* 446.

v. 199. *Late ſlighted* Venus] This Fiction is palpably borrowed from the fifth Book of *Virgil*'s Æneid, where *Iris*, in the Form of *Beroe*, a *Trojan* Matron, adviſes her ſuppoſed Companions to burn the

Why waſte ye thus the Bloom of Youth? (ſhe ſaid)
Ariſe, ariſe, and purge the Marriage Bed;
On me alone for other Flames rely;
Each vacant Bed will I myſelf ſupply.
The Goddeſs ſpoke, and on the Pillow laid
This ſame (believe me) this ſame vengeful Blade,
But linger on, when fair Occaſion calls,
And their Ships ride in Proſpect of our Walls:
At ev'ry Stroke they raiſe the briny Foam,
And bring, perhaps, their *Thracian* Conſorts home.
Her Words their Hearts with manly Rage inſpire,
And ſpread from Breaſt to Breaſt the vengeful Fire.
Not greater Shouts the Plains of *Scythia* rend,
When the fierce Amazons to Fight deſcend,
When their ſtern Patron ſummons from afar
His Virgin-Troops, and frees th' impriſon'd War.
Nor Diſcord, riſing from a various Choice,
Diſturbs their Councils with tumultuous Voice;
But equal was their Will, the ſame their Haſte
To deſolate, and lay each Manſion waſte,

the *Trojan* Fleet, by affirming, that *Caſſandra* had appeared to her for that Purpoſe.

Nam mihi Caſſandræ per ſomnum vatis imago
Ardentes dare viſa faces. *Lib.* 5. *V.* 636.

v. 213. *Not greater Shouts*] Our Author, probably, had the following Simile of *Virgil* in his Eye.

Quales Threiciæ, cum flumine Thermodontis
Pulſant, & pictis bellantur Amazones armis:
Seu circum Hippolyten, ſeu cum ſe Martia curru
Penthefilea refert; magnoque ululante tumultu,
Fœminea exultant lunatis agmina peltis.
Æneid, Lib. 11, *Verſe* 659.

To

To ſtrike the Youth, and Sire with Age oppreſt,
To tear the wailing Infant from the Breaſt,
And ſubject to their unexcepting Rage
Each Stage of Life, and each Degree of Age.
There grew a Foreſt near *Minerva*'s Fane,
Whoſe gloomy Boughs obſcure the ſubject Plain,
A ſteepy Mount o'erhangs the nether Glade,
And *Sol* is loſt between the double Shade.
Here they repair, and at the Rites obſcene
Atteſt *Bellona*, and the *Stygian* Queen.
From *Acheron* their Courſe the Furies bend,
And, uninvok'd, the Sacrifice attend.
The *Paphian* Goddeſs turns on ev'ry Side
Her Steps unknown, and fires each youthful Bride.
Spontaneous then fell *Caropeia* brought
Her Son (his Sex, alas, his only Fault)
A Throng of armed Prieſteſſes ſurrounds,
The Victim falls beneath unnumber'd Wounds:
The Life-Blood iſſuing from a thouſand Strokes,
With horrid Imprecations each invokes:
The recent Shade from its dark Priſon ſprings,
And haunts the Mother with encircling Wings.
Struck at the Sight, my Limbs with Horror ſhook,
The Blood at once my ghaſtly Cheeks forſook.
Thus fares the Hind, by rav'ning Wolves purſu'd,
As firſt ſhe ſeeks the Covert of the Wood;

v. 221. *To ſtrike the Youth*] *Lucan* has deſcribed a general Maſſacre in a ſimilar Manner.

Non ſenis extremum piguit vergentibus annis
Præcipitâſſe diem: nec primo in limine vitæ
Infantis miſeri naſcentia rumpere fata.
Crimine quo parvi cædem potuere mereri.

v. 245. *Thus fares the Hind*] The principal Images which compoſe

Much ſhe diſtruſts a ſafe Retreat in Flight,
But more her Strength and Fortune in the Fight.
Now, now ſhe ſeems to feel her ſeizing Foes,
And hears with Dread their Jaws eluded cloſe.
Mean while, their Anchors dropt, the Ships reſtore
The *Lemnian* Warriors to their native Shore:
With Emulation on the Deck they ſtand,
Contending, who ſhould firſt attain the Strand.
Far happier! had they preſs'd the *Thracian* Plain,
Or ſunk beneath the Fury of the Main,
The lofty Fanes are hid in ambient Smoke,
And votive Victims grace the fatal Stroke:
But the black Flame and unſound Entrails prove
Th' unfav'ring Purpoſe of the Gods above.
Late and unwilling to his watry Bed
The Sun retir'd, and veil'd his radiant Head,

poſe this Compariſon, are taken from the following beautiful one of *Virgil.*

Incluſum veluti ſi quando in flumine nactus
Cervum, aut puniceæ ſeptum formidine pennæ
Venator curſu canis & latratibus inſtat;
Ille autem, inſidiis & ripâ territus altâ,
Mille fugit refugitque vias: at vividus Umber
'Hæret hians, jam jamque tenet, ſimilisque tenenti
'Increpuit malis, morſuque eluſus inani eſt.'
Tum vero exoritur clamor: ripæque, lacuſque
Reſponſant circà, & cœlum tonat omne tumultu.
Æneid, Lib. 12. *Ver.* 749.

v. 259. *Unſound Entrails*] There is a certain Mark in the Entrails, which is called *the God*; and when this appears whole and entire, it betokens the Favour of the Gods. But if it is torn and maimed, it ſhews their Diſpleaſure. *Lactantius.*

v. 261. *Late and unwilling*] However faulty the Heathen Poets have been in their Deſcriptions of the Gods, they generally take Care to throw in ſome Hints of their Abhorrence of Evil, and Unwillingneſs to prevent or delay at leaſt the Perpetration of it, as far as is practicable, without encroaching upon the Prerogative of Fate. Of this we have a remarkable Inſtance before us, where *Jupiter*, to teſtify

Detain'd by *Jove*; nor ever did the Day
So long before ſurvive his ſetting Ray.
The Stars awhile withheld their gleamy Light,
And ſicken'd to behold the fatal Night.
While other Iſles enjoy their uſual Share
Of Light, and glitter with the diſtant Glare,
O'er guilty *Lemnos* gath'ring Clouds ariſe,
And low-hung Vapours choak the lab'ring Skies.
Lemnos, in circling Darkneſs loſt, alone
Was to the ſorrowing Mariner unknown.
Now from the finiſh'd Rites they bend their Way,
To drown in Wine the Labours of the Day;
And, while the ſprightly Eſſence of the Bowl
Glows in each Vein, and opens ev'ry Soul,
With Rapture they recount their recent Toils,
Their Victories, and long-conteſted Spoils.
Their Wives alike indulge the genial Hour,
Studious to pleaſe, and call forth Beauty's Pow'r;
Then Love's ſoft Queen (to crown the ſhort Repaſt,
And bleſs the Night of all their Nights the laſt)
Breath'd in each Huſband's Breaſt a fierce Deſire
Of am'rous Joys that quickly muſt expire.
'Twas dead of Night; the Matrons ceaſe to ſing,
Dumb was each Voice, and mute the tuneful String;

teſtify his Deteſtation of the Matron's Project, is feigned to defer the Approach of Night, which was appointed for the Execution of it. *Lucan*, at the Beginning of his ſeventh Book, ſays,

Segnior oceano, quam lex æterna vocabat,
Luctificus Titan nunquam magis æthera contra
Egit equos, currumque polo rapiente retorſit:
Defectuſque pati voluit, raptæque labores
Lucis: & attraxit nubes, non pabula flammis,
Sed ne Theſſalico purus luceret in orbe.

When

When Sleep, Half-Brother of approaching Death,
Steep'd in ſoft Dews exhal'd from *Styx* beneath,
Safe under Covert of the ſilent Hours,
With laviſh Hand his opiate Juices pours,
But not on all: their Ardour to deſtroy,
And watchful Cares the female Part employ.
At length, no longer patient of Delay,
They ruſh impetuous on their helpleſs Prey:
And each (a Fury lodg'd within her Breaſt,)
Invades her Man, with downy Sleep oppreſt.
Thus *Scythian* Tigreſſes the Herd ſurround,
And leap amidſt them with a furious Bound,
When, preſs'd with Hunger, they deſert the Wood,
Or their fierce Whelps demand the promis'd Food.
What Act of Guilt, or whoſe untimely Fate
Amidſt a Thouſand ſhall I firſt relate?
O'er *Helimus*, with leafy Honours crown'd,
Raſh *Gorge* ſtands, and meditates a Wound.
Cloy'd with the Banquet, he retir'd to Reſt,
And puff'd the fumy God from out his Breaſt;
But Sleep forſook him, ere depriv'd of Breath,
And ſtarting at the cold Approach of Death,

v. 297. *Thus* Scythian *Tigreſſes*] I know not whether I need make an Apology to the Reader, for rendering the Word *Leæ*, Tigreſſes, inſtead of Lioneſſes, as the Deviation is ſo ſmall and yet ſo neceſſary. At leaſt, I ſhould think the Roughneſs of the Verſe, which a cloſe Adherence to the Original in this Place would infallibly occaſion, more inexcuſable,

v. 301. *What Act of Guilt*] There is a beautiful Interrogation of this Sort in the firſt Volume of the *Muſæ Anglicanæ*.

Se pandit ingens area.—ſeu libens
Equoſque currusque Arviragi ſequar,
Neronianos ſeu furores
Ulta, vocet Boadica Muſam?

He

He wakes, confounded at the ſudden View,
And round her Neck his Arms in Tranſport threw,
But mourns the ſocial Greeting ill repaid,
As in his Cheſt he feels the driving Blade.
Nor yet reſenting of his Wound, he preſt
Th' unworthy Object cloſer to his Breaſt,
And, ſtruggling in the griping Arms of Death,
On *Gorge* dwells, and waſtes his parting Breath.
Dire as they were, I cannot now relate
The Vulgar's countleſs Deaths and various Fate:
Suffice it private Evils to diſcloſe,
And meaſure by my own another's Woes.
Cræneus fell, a Warrior fair and bold,
And youthful *Cydon*, grac'd with Locks of Gold.
With theſe, the Product of an Alien's Bed,
I paſs'd my early Days, together bred.
Next *Gyas* bled, deſign'd with me to prove,
Had Heav'n prolong'd his Date, the Joys of Love.
Then fair *Æpopeus* met his Mother's Blade,
As at the Feaſt the wanton Stripling play'd.
Lycaſte of her Rage diſarm'd, appears
And ſheds o'er *Cydimus* a Flood of Tears;
As ſhe beheld a Face of her own Mold,
And Hair which ſhe herſelf had trick'd with Gold,
Her Conſort ſlain, her Mother near her ſtands,
Impells with Threats, and arms her trembling Hands.
As when the Lion, or the ſpotted Pard,
Long from the Woods and Foreſts are debarr'd,
With equal Pain and Labour is renew'd
Their ſavage Nature, as at firſt ſubdu'd.
The fair *Lycaſte* thus reſiſts in vain;
She ruſhes on him, as he preſs'd the Plain.

Catches the welling Blood, and to renew
His Wounds, by the looſe Hair his Body drew.
But as *Alcimede* I firſt ſurvey'd,
Her Sire's pale Viſage fix'd upon the Blade,
Fear ſhrunk my Sinews, and congeal'd my Blood,
And on my Head my Hair erected ſtood.
My Father's Image fill'd my pious Mind,
Leſt equal Years might equal Fortune find.
From thence in Haſte I ſeek the regal Seat;
Fear aids my Courſe, and wings my tardy Feet:
My Sire I found perplex'd with Doubts and Fears,
(For now the Shouts and Groans awak'd his Ears,
And broke his Slumbers, tho' the Palace ſtood
Sequeſter'd, and incompaſs'd with a Wood)
The Motives of my Flight I ſoon diſcloſe,
And all the Series of preceding Woes:
'Ariſe, ariſe, or you for ever fall;
'Our female Foes approach the regal Hall:
'Nor on our utmoſt Speed I much rely;
'The Shaft may yet arreſt us as we fly.'

v. 343. *But as* Alcimede] This Circumſtance, with many others in this Narration, is taken from the ſecond Book of *Virgil*'s Æneid, where *Æneas*, after having juſt related the Manner of *Priam*'s Death, ſays,

Ac me tum primùm ſævus circumſtetit horror:
Obſtupui: ſubiit chari genitoris imago,
Ut regem æquævum crudeli vulnere vidi
Vitam exhalantem: *Ver.* 559.

v. 351: *My Sire I found*] *Virgil* has a ſimilar Paſſage in the ſecond Æneid, Verſe 298.

Diverſo interea miſcentur mœnia luctu:
Et magis atque magis (quanquam ſecreta parentis
Anchiſæ domus, arboribusque obtecta receſſit)
Clareſcunt ſonitus, atque armorum ingruit horror.

Struck

Struck at the News, the hoary King aroſe,
And left the ſilent Manſion of Repoſe.
Thro' the leaſt peopled Parts we ſpeed our Way,
And, in a ſable Cloud obſcur'd, ſurvey
The Paſſages and Streets around diſpread
With Streams of Blood and Mountains of the Dead.
Here Blades half-buried in the recent Wound,
And ſhiver'd Lances ſparkling on the Ground:
There tatter'd Robes diſcolour'd by the Sword,
And Heads yet bleeding on the genial Board.
There Bowls and Tables, floating in a Tide
Of Slaughter, we with Grief and Horror ey'd.
And Warriors, vomiting a crimſon Flood
From their torn Throats, of Wine and mingled Blood.
Here dy'd the luſty Youth in manly Bloom,
There aged Sires that ſhar'd an equal Doom;
There Babes, whoſe Infant-Tongues ſcarce yet began
To form in broken Sounds the Speech of Man.
Such Scenes of Carnage and Debauch ſucceed
Theſſalian Feaſts on *Oſſa*'s Summit ſpread,
When *Bacchus* heats the Cloud-born Centaurs Brains,
And fires the Blood that revels in their Veins;
With Goblets firſt, then Weapons they engage,
And mutual Deaths ariſe from mutual Rage.
While, favour'd by the Gloom, we urge our Flight,
Propitious *Bacchus* ſtood reveal'd to Sight,

v. 379. *Such Scenes of Carnage*] For an Account of the Fight between the *Lapithæ* and *Centaurs*, ſee *Ovid*'s *Metamorphoſes*, Book 12.

v. 385. *While, favour'd by the Gloom.*] *Barthius* has obſerved that this Introduction of *Bacchus* is an Imitation of *Virgil*, who deſcribes *Venus* appearing to *Æneas* in the following Manner:

——Mihi ſe non ante oculos tam clara videndam
Obtulit

His Courſe from Heav'n to yield us Aid he ſped,
And lambent Glories danc'd around his Head.
Full well diſtinguiſh'd, tho' no Chaplets bound
His ruddy Brows, nor Wreaths of Vine-Leaves crown'd:
A briny Torrent flows adown his Cheeks,
And thus the mournful God his Son beſpeaks.
While *Lemnos* ſhone, defended by the Fates,
In Peace at Home, rever'd by foreign States,
No Care was wanting on my Part to ſpeed
Each Enterpriſe, and make their Toils ſucceed.
Our preſent Woes the Deſtinies ordain,
And Gods implore, and Men reſiſt in vain.
With Tears and Blandiſhments I ſought to move
The Sire of Heav'n and thwart the Queen of Love;
But at her Suit the partial Thund'rer nods,
Rejects our Prayers, nor heeds the ſuppliant Gods.
Haſte, haſte away: 'tis thine, O Nymph to ſhare
A Parent's Lot, and make his Life thy Care;
Convey him hence thro' yon deſerted Gate,
And ſeize the fair Occaſion, e'er too late;
In t'other *Venus*, girt in Armour, ſtands,
And animates to Fight her female Bands.
Whence this new Thirſt of Blood, this vengeful Flame,
That fires the Boſom of ſo ſoft a Dame?

> Obtulit, & purâ per noctem in luce refulſit
> Alma parens, confeſſa Deam; *B. 2. V. 589.*

v. 401. *But at her Suit*] This Nod of *Jupiter* was ſo ſacred, that whatever Promiſe obtained the Sanction of it, was eſteemed inviolable, as *Homer* informs us in the following Verſes:

> Εἰ δ' ἄγε, τοι κεφαλῇ κατανεύσομαι, ὄφρα πεποίθῃς·
> Τοῦτο γὰρ ἐξ ἐμέθεν γε μετ' ἀθανάτοισι μέγιστον
> Τέκμωρ· οὐ γάρ ἐμὸν παλινάγρετον, οὐδ' ἀπάτηλον,
> Οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητόν γ' ὅ, τι κεν κεφαλῇ κατανεύσω.

Do you your Father to the Deep attend;
The Taſk be mine his Paſſage to befriend:
This ſaid, he ſoon diſſolves in Air again,
And while black Shades conceal from us the Train
Of watchful Females, darts a flaming Ray
That ſhone a Guide, and pointed out the Way.
With Speed the God's Directions we purſue,
And ſoon in Part the ready Veſſel view;
My Sire embark'd, to *Neptune*'s watchful Care,
And *Æolus*, I oft commend with Pray'r.
No Bound th' alternate Stream of Sorrow knows,
'Till beamy *Phoſphor*, riſing on our Woes,
Gave Warning of *Aurora*'s haſt'ning Car,
And deep in Ocean ſunk each paler Star.
Unwilling then the Veſſel I forſook,
And often backward caſt a wiſhful Look;
'Till now the long-expected Gales ariſe,
And ſnatch the leſs'ning Object from my Eyes.
At length the Morn, the bluſhing Morn aroſe,
Whoſe Beams the Horrors of the Night diſcloſe,
Black interpoſing Clouds ariſe between,
And from her Sight exclude the loathſome Scene,
Their Actions now expos'd in open Day,
The trembling Matrons curſe the treach'rous Ray;

v. 415. *A flaming Ray*] This Circumſtance ſeems borrowed from *Virgil*, who introduces *Jupiter* aſſiſting *Æneas* to make his Eſcape in the following Lines:

Stella facem ducens multa cum luce cucurrit,
Illam ſumma ſuper labentem culmina tecti,
Cernimus Idæâ claram ſe condere ſylvâ,
Signantemque vias; tum longo limite ſulcus
Dat lucem, & latè circum loca ſulphure fumant.
Æn. Lib. 2. *V.* 694.

Each would her Share of Guilt with Joy diſclaim,
And, bluſhing meets the Partner of her Shame.
They burn the Bodies, or inhume with Speed,
And hope in vain to veil the glaring Deed.
But when the *Cyprian* Goddeſs, cloy'd with Gore,
And her fell Co-aids left the captive Shore,
The Wretches, ſtung with ſharp Reflection, tear
Their Locks, and weep involv'd in deep Deſpair.
An Iſland, late enrich'd with *Thracian* Spoils,
Fam'd for its Produce, Wealth, and martial Toils,
Bewails the raviſh'd Glory of her Coaſt,
Her Infants, Senate, and victorious Hoſt.
Nor does ſhe this irreparable Woe
To Shipwreck, War, or waſting Sickneſs owe;
But her own Hands, the Tools of envious Fate,
Wrought the dire Miſchief, which ſhe mourns too late.
No more her vig'rous Sons exert their Toil
To plow the Deeps, or break the ſtubborn Soil.
O'er the whole Town unwonted Silence reigns,
And clotted Blood each widow'd Manſion ſtains.
Stern Phantoms, riſing from the Shades beneath,
The Sounds of Vengeance in low Whiſpers breathe.

v. 439. *But, when the* Cyprian *Goddeſs*] From the preſent Paſſage we may ſee to what a Degree the ſmalleſt Circumſtance is aggrandized and heightened in the Hands of a great Poet. The Senſe of the Allegory is obviouſly this: when their Rage and Paſſion had ſubſided, and gave Place to cooler and more mature Reflection.—This Perſonification of the Affections was introduced firſt into *Greece* by the *Egyptians*, and tranſlated thence to *Italy*. *Valerius Flaccus*, who has ſlightly touched on this Subject in his *Argonautics*, ſays, they were infatuated to ſuch a Degree, as to ſet their own Houſes on Fire.

——— Diras alias ad faſtigia tedas
Injiciunt, adduntque domos. ———

The latter Part of this Remark belongs to *Barthius*.

Within

Within the inner Court in Haſte I raiſe
A ſylvan Pile, to feed the fun'ral Blaze;
On this the Scepter, Arms and Robes, that grac'd
The *Lemnian* Monarch, are in Order plac'd.
With Looks dejected, near the Pile I ſtand,
A bloody Dagger arms my better Hand.
My ſcatter'd Hair in wild Diſorder flows,
My Habit ſuch as ſuited with my Woes.
Nor Tears, the Token of a wounded Heart,
Were wanting to compleat the Mourner's Part.
To prove their Approbation of the Deed,
The *Lemnian* Scepter is to me decreed.
(So much my flowing Tears and ready Tale
Did o'er each Female's eaſy Faith prevail)
What could I do, thus preſs'd by their Demands,
Oft I confeſs'd my undeſerving Hands
Before the Gods——Conſtrain'd at length t'obey,
I take the Crown and mutilated Sway,
From hence a Load of watchful Cares aroſe,
And anxious Thoughts, impatient of Repoſe,

v. 459. *On this the Scepter*] That this was an eſtabliſhed Cuſtom among the ancient Heathens, may be inferred from the following Verſes of *Virgil*, where *Dido* is introduced giving her laſt Commands to her Siſter.

Tu ſecreta pyram tecto inferiore ſub auras
Erige, & arma viri, thalamo quæ fixa reliquit
Dextra feras, ——— *Æn. Lib. 4.*

Philoctetes likewiſe in the *Hercules Oetæus* of *Seneca* ſays,

Hiç nodus, inquit, nulla quem çapiet manus,
Mecum per ignem flagrat, hoc telum Herculem
Tantum ſequatur. Hoc quoque acciperes, ait,
Si ferre poſſes. Adjuvet Domini rogum.
Tum rigida ſecum ſpolia Nemæi mali
Arſura poſcit. ——— *Act 5. Ver. 1660.*

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Tum rigida ſecum ſpolia Nemæi mali
Arſura poſcit. ——— *Act 5. Ver. 1660.*

Polyxo's Guilt in Viſions ſtands renew'd,
And *Lemnian* Horrors in our Slumbers brood;
Till Altars to their angry Shades we rear,
And by their Aſhes with Devotion ſwear,
Thus when the Savage Monarch of the Wood,
Impell'd with Anger, or Deſire of Food,
Has torn ſome lordly Bull, who long had led
The ſubject Cattle, Ruler of the Mead,
The headleſs Herd in ſtragg'ling Parties roves,
Unmindful of their Paſture or their Loves;
Huſh'd are the Fields, the Rivers ceaſe to roar,
And the mute Herds their common Loſs deplore.
But lo! the *Argo*, loaded with a Train
Of Heroes, cleaves th' inviolated Main:
From *Theſſaly* the daring Warriors came,
Embolden'd by the glorious Luſt of Fame.

v. 481. *Thus when the Savage*] Thoſe who always expect in *Statius* thoſe minute Reſemblances in every Branch of a Compariſon, which are the Pride of modern Similies, will frequently find themſelves diſappointed in the Courſe of this Work. He ſeems ſo ſecure of the main Likeneſs, that he makes no Scruple of neglecting the ſmall Circumſtances in ſuch a Manner as to leave the Reader to ſupply them himſelf, and ſeems more deſirous of preſenting the Mind with a great Image, than fixing it down to an exact one. The Writers of the preſent Age act in a quite different, though leſs judicious Manner, and diſtract and confound the Reader with a Multiplicity of Images, as the ingenious Authors of the *Monthly Review* have rightly obſerved. Their Poems are not unlike the *Dutch* Pieces of Painting, where the Figures are ſo thick, that they are loſt and confounded in each other. This Simile, however, is applicable in every Particular; the headleſs Herd anſwers to the People of *Lemnos*, the Silence of the Fields, Rivers, *&c.* to that of the Town, and the ſlaughtered Bull to the Men maſſacred by the Women.

v. 490. *Of Heroes*] They were ſent by *Pelias* King of *Theſſaly*, to fetch the Golden Fleece from *Colchis*. The Reader may find their Voyage and Adventures deſcribed at large in *Valerius Flaccus* and *Apollonius*, who have both written a large Poem on this Subject only.

On

On either Side the hoary Billows riſe,
And work their foamy Fury to the Skies,
Like ſome huge Mountain, white with ancient Snows,
Or floating Iſle, the lofty Veſſel ſhows.
Soon as the lab'ring Oars enjoin'd to ceaſe,
The hoarſe-reſounding Deep was huſh'd in Peace,
From out the middle Ship a Voice aroſe,
(The middle Ship the liſt'ning Waves incloſe.)
Far ſofter than the Swan expiring ſings,
Or *Phœbus*, when he ſtrikes the tuneful Strings.
'Twas *Orpheus*, taught by his celeſtial Sire,
To ſing in ſweet Conjunction with the Lyre.
The ſprightly Muſic of his varied Lay
Drives ev'ry Senſe but Hearing far away;
And all, attentive to his pleaſing Strains,
Forget the paſt, nor feel the preſent Pains.
To fartheſt *Scythia* were th' Advent'rers bound,
And where the Straits of *Boſphorus* reſound.
The Crew miſtaken for a *Thracian* Band,
In ſtraggling Troops we quit the duſty Strand;
Like Flocks of Birds, or Oxen, when diſmay'd,
They hear the Lion in the ruſtling Shade.

v. 503. *T'was* Orpheus] The Hiſtory of *Orpheus* is too well known to need an explanatory Note. It will be ſufficient to obſerve, that he was a *Thracian* by Birth, the Son of *Apollo* and *Calliope*, and murdered by the *Thracian* Bacchanals. The extraordinary Effects of his Skill in Muſic are thus ſummed up by *Horace*.

Orphea ——
Arte maternâ rapidos morantem
Fluminum lapſus, celereſque ventos.
Blandum et auritas fidibus canoris
Ducere quercus. *B.* 1. *Ode* 12.

v. 510. *The Straits of* Boſphorus] The *Boſphorus* is a Part of the Sea, which lies in two different Coaſts: the one by *Conſtantinople* and the other at the Entrance of the Black Sea.

No Furies were at Hand to reinſpire
Heroic Thoughts, and wake our dormant Fire.
We climb the Turret, whoſe impending Steep
Affords a Proſpect of the diſtant Deep;
Here Javelins, Stones, and knotty Clubs we bore,
And Swords, polluted with their Maſter's Gore,
Confine within the Mail our jutting Breaſts,
And proudly ſtrut beneath the nodding Creſts.
On fronting *Hæmus* ſmil'd the God of Fight,
And *Pallas* bluſh'd, aſtoniſh'd at the Sight.
Then firſt Reflection with her Fears return'd,
And their paſt Actions with Regret they mourn'd,
Leſt Heav'n, to puniſh their preſumptuous Crime,
Had ſent the Veſſel from ſome hoſtile Clime.
They now had almoſt gain'd the ſandy Beach,
And ſtood within a *Cretan* Arrow's Reach;
When pregnant Clouds o'erhang the boiling Main,
And *Jove* deſcends in fluicy Sheets of Rain.
Horror ſits brooding o'er the liquid Way,
And *Sol* deſerts the violated Day.

v. 523. *On fronting* Hæmus] The Epithet *adverſo*, which I have rendered by *fronting*, has afforded Matter of Speculation to the judicious *Barthius*, who, informs us, that it is very doubtful, whether it ſhould be applied to the Situation of the Mountain, or the Enmity *Mars* bore the *Lemnians* on Account of their Patron *Vulcan*. With Submiſſion to this Critic's ſuperior Judgment, we muſt beg Leave to obſerve, that there is a more natural Reaſon to be given for the Enmity of *Hæmus* (if we ſuppoſe *adverſus* to ſignify *hoſtile* in this Place, which we very much doubt) *viz.* the Invaſion of *Thrace* by the *Lemnians* a little before. *Barthius* had certainly forgotten this, or he never would have troubled his Readers with this fetched Hypotheſis and critical Refinement.

The Reader may judge from this Specimen, how much Patience is requiſite to peruſe all the Notes and Obſervations of the Commentators, and learn to commiſerate the Tranſlator, who muſt either do it, or lie under the Imputation of Negligence and Careleſſneſs.

From ev'ry Quarter ruſhing Winds reſound,
Plow up the Deep, and hurl the Sands around.
Surges on Surges roll with hideous Roar,
And claſh and break, and thunder to the Shore.
Obſequious to the Wind the Veſſel plies,
And, wafted by the Billows, ſeeks the Skies,
Or, as the gaping Main at once divides,
On naked Sands with ſwift Deſcent ſubſides.
The Canvas flits before the driving Blaſt,
And with a Craſh deſcends the wav'ring Maſt.
The Pilot's Art, and Strength of Rowers fail,
Nor Demigods againſt the Storm prevail.
While thus the Tempeſt's growing Rage demands
Their utmoſt Care, employing all their Hands,
From ev'ry Eminence a mingled Show'r
Of Stones and Jav'lins on the Ship we pour;
At *Telamon* and mighty *Peleus* throw,
And threat *Alcides* with the *Cretan* Bow.
At once with *Mars* and *Neptune* they engage;
Some aim the Dart with unavailing Rage:
Th' unſteady Motion of the Veſſel's Courſe,
Their Efforts breaks, and leſſens half their Force.
The floating Hold of Water others clear,
And intercept with Shields the ruſhing Spear.
Nor ceaſe we yet our miſſive Arms to ply,
But rain a winged Tempeſt from on high.

v. 551. *At* Telamon] *Telamon* was the Father of *Ajax* and *Peleus*, his Brother, of *Achilles*. The Strength of *Hercules* is much too well known to require a Note.

v. 554. *Some aim the Dart*] This Default was occaſioned by the violent Motion of the Ship. *Lucan* ſays,

Incertaſque manus ictu languente per undas
Exercent.

Vaſt

Vaſt Stakes, and an enormous Weight of Stone,
With Jav'lins recent from the Flames are thrown.
Now on the leaning Veſſel they deſcend,
Or hiſſing in the Deep their Fury ſpend.
In ev'ry Joint the groaning *Argo* ſounds,
And gapes wide-op'ning with a thouſand Wounds.
As when the piercing Blaſts of *Boreas* blow,
And ſcatter o'er the Field the driving Snow,
The Beaſts beneath the fleecy Ruin lie,
And intercepted Birds forſake the Sky.
Pale *Ceres* droops reclining on the Ground,
The Mountains echo, and the Deeps rebound.
But, as the Light'ning, beaming thro' the Shade,
The manly Features of each Face diſplay'd,
The falling Arms our feeble Gripe forſook,
And ev'ry Limb with chilling Horror ſhook.

v. 567. *As when the piercing Blaſts*] *Homer* has a no leſs beautiful Compariſon.

——Ὡς νιφάδες χιόνος πίπτουσι θαμειαὶ
Ἤματι χειμερίῳ, ὅτε τ' ὄρνυτο μήτιετα Ζεύς
Νιφέμεν ἀνθρώποισι, πιφαυσκόμενος τὰ ἃ κῆλα,
Κοιμήσας δ' ἀνέμους χέεν ἐμπεδον, ὄφρα καλύψῃ
Ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων κορυφὰς, καὶ πρώονας ἄκρους,
Καὶ πιδία λωτεντα, καὶ ἀνδρῶν πίονα ἔργα,
Καὶ τ' ἐπ' ἀλὸς πολιῆς πέχυλαι λιμέσιν τε καὶ ἀκταῖς,
Κῦμα δέ μιν πρὸς πλαζον ἐρύκεται, ἄλλα τε πάντα
Εἰλύαται καθύπερ δ' ὅτ' ἐπιδρίσῃ Διὸς ὄμβρος. Iliad. B. 12.

v. 575. *The falling Arms*] This Circumſtance was a Favourite of the Poets in their Deſcriptions of the Effects of a ſudden Fright.

Τῆς δ' ἐλελίχθη γυῖα, χαμαὶ δέ οἱ ἔκπεσε κηρός.
Homer's Iliad, *B.* 22. *V.* 448.

Nuncia fama ruit, matriſque adlabitur aures
Euryali; ac——
Excuſſi manibus radii, revolutaque penſa.
Virgil's *Æn. B.* 9. *V.* 474.

——Primo qui cædis in ictu
Diriguit, ferrumque manu torpente remiſit.
Lucan's *Phar. B.* 2. *V.* 77.

Prevailing

Prevailing Nature roſe in ev'ry Breaſt,
And Tenderneſs, our Sex's only Teſt.
Th' *Æacidæ* firſt ſtrike our wond'ring Eyes,
And ſtern *Ancæus* of gigantic Size.
Next *Iphitus*, who with protended Spear
From threat'ning Rocks preſerv'd the Veſſel clear.
Then *Hercules*, impatient for the Land,
We ſoon diſtinguiſh from th' inferior Band:
The Veſſel leans beneath the future God,
From Side to Side alternate as he ſtrode.
But nimble *Jaſon*, haply then unknown,
Amidſt his Comrades far conſpicuous ſhone.
From Bench to Bench inceſſantly he flew,
And animates by Turns the drooping Crew:
On *Ida* now, *Oenides* then he calls,
And threatens much th' inhoſpitable Walls;
With Wrath the ling'ring *Salaus* he view'd,
And *Tyndar*'s Son with briny Foam bedew'd,
Nor unapprov'd the Son of *Boreas* paſt,
Who toil'd to fix the Canvas to the Maſt.
With animating Shouts the liquid Plain,
And echoing Walls they ſhake, but ſhake in vain.
The Tempeſt grows reluctant to their Toils,
And from the Tow'rs each ſhiver'd Spear recoils.
In vain the Pilot plies his weary Hands;
The Waves and Rudder hear not his Commands.
Whether to Right or Left he turns the Prow,
The Labour riſes, and the Dangers grow.
Till *Æſon*'s Offspring from the Stern diſplay'd,
The Olive, ſacred to the martial Maid;
And Peace and an Alliance aſks aloud,
Tho' interrupted by the noiſy Crowd.

Scarce

Scarce could the fault'ring Accents reach the Shore,
Loſt in the louder Sea's tempeſtuous Roar.
At length the Storm and War together ceaſe,
The Waves unruffle and ſubſide in Peace:
While *Phœbus*, iſſuing from a ruddy Cloud,
Reſtor'd the Day, and more ſerenely glow'd.
From Planks compacted with a furious Bound,
The Warriors gain the late unfriendly Ground;
And by their Arms and princely Veſtments known,
With Shouts are welcom'd to the widow'd Town.
Their Features undiſturb'd with Wrath or Fear,
Attract our Eyes, and doubly fair appear.
Thus oft the Gods (as antient Fame reports)
Reſign their Pomp, and quit th' etherial Courts:

v. 621. *Thus oft the Gods*] The following Simile is exquiſitely beautiful, and full of that ſublime Simplicity, which *Longinus* commends ſo much in *Homer*. Had that Critic ſeen it, he had undoubtedly given it a Place in his Collection, and ranked it with the celebrated Deſcription of *Neptune* in the 13th Book of the *Iliad*, which, if it was not for the Anticlimax at the cloſe of our Poet's, would not, we believe, be thought ſuperior. There are ſome Stanzas in a Poem on the King's coming to *Oxford* (where the ſame Compariſon is made uſe of) which, we think, are imitated from our Author's with great Happineſs.

Ille ut ſuperbo Jupiter agmine
Cinctus Deorum, ſæpius Iſidis
Inviſit undas, & fluenta
Jam Thameſis potiora lymphis,
Quocunque tendunt, induitur novam
Natura formam, Floraque paſcuo
Miratur agreſti virentes
Sponte ſuos properare fœtus.
Vel teſta quiddam majus & amplius
Mutata præſtant, hic quaſi Carolus
Palatium præſens creaſſet,
Artifices ſuperans labores. *Muſ. Anglic. Ver.* 1.

The

hen to fair *Æthiopia* they repair,
nd make awhile the genial Feaſt their Care.
o leave their Paſſage clear, the Seas divide,
nd Mountains, level with the Vales, ſubſide.
n Earth a ſudden Spring is ſeen to riſe,
or *Atlas* groans beneath th' incumbent Skies.
ere valiant *Theſeus*, clad in ſhaggy Spoils,
he Trophies of his *Marathonian* Toils,
ne Sons of *Boreas*, on whoſe Temples grew
Wing, that flutter'd oft as *Boreas* blew,
eat *Peleus*, vanquiſh'd by his greater Son,
he daring Youth, the Pride of *Caledon*,
lmetus, by the God of Day obey'd,
nd *Orpheus*, ſcarce a *Thracian*, we ſurvey'd.

e Hint of this Compariſon was taken from *Homer*, who in the 18
ok of the *Iliad*, ſays,

Ζεύς γάρ ἐπ' ὠκεανὸν μετ' ἀμύμονας Αἰθιοπῆας
Κθιζὸς ἶεν μετὰ δαῖτα· θεοὶ δ' ἅμα πάντες ἕποντο. Verſe 423.

r. 629. *Here valiant* Theſeus] *Theſeus* was the Son of *Ægeus*,
ng of *Athens*, famous for his Friendſhip and valorous Actions,
ong which the Slaughter of the *Marathonian* Bull was the principal.
uos, during the Preparations for a Sacrifice to *Jove*, demanded in
yer a Victim worthy of the God; upon which he ſent a Bull of
uiſite Beauty. His Daughter *Paſiphae* falling in Love with him,
ſuaded her Father to preſerve him alive, which enraged *Jupiter* ſo
ch, that he cauſed him to go mad: at length being tamed by
cules, he was dedicated to *Juno* at *Argos*, from whence he eſcaped
Marathon, where he was ſlain by *Theſeus*.

r. 631. *The Sons of* Boreas] Their Names were *Calais* and *Zethes*.
dar has given the following Account of them.

——— καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖν
θυμῷ γελανεῖ θάσσον ἐ-
τύσι βασιλευς ἀνέμων
Ζήτας Καλαΐντε παλὺρ Βόρεω,
Ἀνδρας πλεοῖσι νώτα πε-
φεισένους ἀμφω πορφυρέοις. Pyth. Ode 4. Epode 8.

The

The *Spartan* Twins, alike in Shape and Size,
An Error cauſe in each Spectator's Eyes.
A ſhining Tunic either Champion wore,
Each in his Hand a pointed Jav'lin bore.
Bare are the Cheeks of each, their Shoulders bare,
And ſtarry Glories grace their ſparkling Hair.
Behind his Lord, young *Hylas* tript along,
Loſt and obſcur'd amidſt the tow'ring Throng:
With Pain his tender Feet the Stripling ply'd
To match the Demigod's gigantic Stride.
And ſweating under the huge Quiver bore
The Shafts envenom'd with *Lernæan* Gore.
The *Paphian* Queen repeats her fraudful Arts,
And tempts again with Love our ſoften'd Hearts.
Saturnia too, divulges thro' the Town
The Warrior's Nation, Rank and high Renown.
Then firſt our Altars blaz'd, our Rites began,
But Heav'n and *Jove* are loſt in dearer Man.
The Gates are open to each welcome Gueſt,
(Our late Averſion to the Sex ſuppreſs'd)
The dead is to the living Love reſign'd,
And ſweet Oblivion calms each anxious Mind.

v. 654. *But Heav'n*] This Line calls to my Remembrance ſome fine ones in Mr. *Pope*'s *Eloiſa* and *Abelard*.

The dear Ideas, where I fly purſue,
Riſe in the Grove, before the Altar riſe,
Stain all my Soul, and wanton in my Eyes.
I waſte the matin Lamp in Sighs for thee,
Thy Image ſteals between my God and me,
Thy Voice I ſeem in ev'ry Hymn to hear,
With ev'ry Bead I drop a tender Tear.
When from the Cenſer Clouds of Fragrance roll,
And ſwelling Organs lift the riſing Soul,
One Thought of thee puts all the Pomp to Flight,
Prieſts, Tapers, Temples ſwim before my Sight.

Then

Then were the Pleaſures of the genial Board,
And loſt Repoſe by pitying Heav'n reſtor'd.
Nor, as her Crime is known, O Chiefs, refuſe
To hear an artleſs Woman's juſt Excuſe.
By the late Furies of our Sex I vow,
And Aſhes of my Friends inurn'd below,
Unmov'd by Luſt, I gave my plighted Hand,
Conſtrain'd by Fate, and adverſe Heav'ns Command.
But he, the treach'rous Partner of my Bed
(My love unheeded, and my Perſon fled)
Adores and gazes on another's Charms,
And revels in a *Colchian* Harlot's Arms.
Returning Spring had now prolong'd the Day,
And Earth relenting felt the genial Ray,
When fav'ring Heav'n, our nuptial Joys to crown,
With unexpected Clamours fills the Town.
Myſelf, conſtrain'd a Mother's Throes to prove,
Diſcloſe a double Pledge of mutual Love:
One ſtill retains his wretched Grandſire's Name,
(The moſt, perhaps, that Fate allows to claim.)
Full twenty Suns have deck'd the Courts above,
Since firſt they breath'd the vital Air of *Jove*;
Lycaſte then receiv'd them as her own,
From that ſad Day their Fortune is unknown.
Calm was old Ocean's Face, and ſouthern Gales
In riſing Murmur's tempt the ſwelling Sails.

v. 669. *On another's Charms*] When *Jaſon* arrived at *Colchos*, and was informed, that the Capture of the Golden Fleece depended on the Aſſiſtance of *Medea*, he married and afterwards left her for *Creuſa*, Daughter of *Creon* King of *Corinth*. *Euripides* and *Seneca* have written a Tragedy on this Subject.

The

The Ship, impatient for the liquid Way,
Frets in the Port, and loathes the long Delay.
There *Jaſon* calls the ling'ring Chiefs aboard,
And the glad Veſſel with Proviſion ſtor'd.
Oh! had he never touch'd the *Lemnian* Shore,
But paſs'd direct to *Colchos*, ſince no more
My Acts of Kindneſs his Compaſſion move,
Nor Vows, nor dearer Pledges of his Love.
Yet ſhall impartial Fame to lateſt Times
Tranſmit his Guilt, and brand the Traitor's Crimes.
When now the Sun, whoſe next revolving Beam
Muſt cloſe our Loves, had ſought the weſtern Stream,
The Groans of the late dreadful Night return,
And Rage again and jealous Fury burn.
Scarce had *Aurora* chac'd the Stars away,
And op'd the roſy Portals of the Day,
When *Æſon*'s Son, conſpicuous from afar,
Plies the firſt Oar, and leads the wat'ry War.
From ev'ry Rock, and Hill's impending Steep
We long purſue them o'er the expanded Deep,
Till, the Waves joining with the diſtant Skies,
Th' excluded Objects vaniſh from our Eyes.

v. 685. *The Ship*] The Diction in this Place, daring as it ſeems, is not too big for the Senſe, but juſt in Proportion to it. A Man who condemns this as extravagant, can have no Reliſh for Poetry, ſince it is the very Soul and Eſſence of it. 'Tis compoſed of what *Ariſtotle*, with great Propriety, ſtiles *living Words*, i. e. ſuch as exalt and enliven the Sentiment. *Homer* often tells us, an Arrow is impatient to be diſcharged, and a Weapon thirſts for Blood, which is equally bold and flighty with this before us.

v. 689. *Oh! had he never*] This is more moderate than

O! utinam tunc cum Lacedæmona claſſe petivit,
Obrutus inſanis eſſet adulter aquis.

Though perhaps *Hypſipile* had the greateſt Reaſon to complain.

A Rumour

A Rumour ſpread, that wafted o'er the Main,
Old *Thoas* ſhares his Brother's ample Reign,
That all my Sorrow was a Feint alone;
And but for Show the Pyres thick flaming ſhone;
Stung with Remorſe, aroſe the guilty Crowd,
And, for my Share of Slaughter, call aloud.
Shall only ſhe (they cry) refuſe to bear
A Part in Guilt, while joyful we appear.
No more believe we, 'twas the Fates' Decree,
Or Will of Heav'n, if ſhe alone is free.
Warn'd by theſe Words to ſhun their vengeful Hate,
I quit the Burden of imperial State,
And ſeek my Father's well-known Track of Flight
Along the Shore, befriended by the Night;
But *Bacchus* then was wanting in his Aid,
For, as through Woods and devious Wilds I ſtray'd,
A Band of ruthleſs Pirates forc'd aboard,
And ſold me to proud *Nemea*'s haughty Lord.
While thus the Queen harangues the liſt'ning Train,
And, by divulging it, forgets her Pain;
The tender Infant whom ſhe left behind,
(So the ſtern Gods advis'd and Fates deſign'd)
In fatal Slumbers hangs his drooping Head,
The Skies his Canopy, the Ground his Bed,
And, cloy'd with Sport, and weary with his Toils,
Graſp'd in his Hand the Graſs and *Flora*'s Spoils.
Mean while, along the Fields a Serpent roves,
Earth-born, the Terror of *Achæan* Groves;

v. 733. *Mean while*] The following Deſcription of this Animal will not be thought inferior to that of *Virgil* in the ſecond Book.

Ecce autem gemini à Tenedo tranquilla per alta

Sublime on radiant Spires he glides along,
And brandiſhes by Fits his triple Tongue.
An hideous Length of Tail behind he draws,
And foamy Venom iſſues from his Jaws.
Three Rows of Teeth his Mouth expanded ſhews,
And from his Creſt terrific Glories roſe.
The Peaſants conſecrated him to *Jove*,
The tutelary Patron of the Grove;
Whoſe Altars, rais'd of Living Turf are ſtor'd
With humble Off'rings, which the Swains afford.
One while he rolls his curling Volumes round
The Sylvan Fane, or ploughs the furrow'd Ground;
Then round an Oak his ſcaly Length he twines,
And breaks in his Embrace the tougheſt Pines.
From Bank to Bank extended oft he lies,
Cut by his Scales the Waves high-bubbling riſe.
But now, when Earth is furrow'd o'er with Chinks,
And ev'ry Nymph within her Channel ſinks;
He twiſts, impatient of th' autumnal Heats,
His ſpiry Length, and wide Deſtruction threats,
And thro' exhauſted Springs and ſtanding Lakes
In winding Folds his noxious Progreſs takes.
One while he bares his lolling Tongue in Air,
Thro' Impotence of Pain and wild Deſpair,
Then crawls, adheſive to the groaning Plain,
If haply Dew or Moiſture yet remain.

(Horreſco referens) immenſis orbibus angues
Incumbunt pelago, pariterque ad littora tendunt:
Pectora quorum inter fluctus arrecta, jubæque
Sanguineæ exſuperant undas; pars cætera pontum
Pone legit, ſinuatque immenſa volumina tergo.
Fit ſonitus ſpumante ſalo: jamque arva tenebant;
Ardenteſque oculos ſuffecti ſanguine, et igne,
Sibila lambebant linguis vibrantibus ora. *Verſe* 203.

Where'er

Where'er he breathes, the blaſted Herbage dies,
And waſting Poiſons from his Hiſſing riſe.
Vaſt as the vengeful Dragon, that around
The double Summit of *Parnaſſus* wound,
Till on his Back, that ouz'd at ev'ry Pore
A Stream of Blood, a Grove of Spears he bore:
Or he, who round the Pole mæandring glides,
And fair *Calyſto* from her Son divides.
What God, O Infant! thus adorn'd thy Death,
And why ſo ſoon depriv'd of vital Breath?
Was it from each ſucceeding Age to claim
Eternal Honours, and a deathleſs Name?
Smit with his Tail, the dying Babe awoke,
(Nor was the Serpent conſcious of the Stroke)
Sleep ſoon invades his ſtiff'ning Limbs again,
And locks them in an adamantine Chain.
His Nurſe, alarm'd at his half-finiſh'd Screams,
(Such as are utter'd in terrific Dreams)
Eſſays to fly; but, deſtitute of Force,
Her fault'ring Limbs deſert her in the Courſe.
Too certain now of the portended Ill
By various Omens, which her Boſom fill,

v. 763. *Vaſt as the vengeful Dragon*] The Poets feign this Dragon was a Favourite of *Juno*, and the Keeper of the *Heſperian* Garden; but was afterwards ſlain by *Hercules*, and tranſlated to Heaven. *Virgil* thus deſcribes him.

Maximus hic flexu ſinuoſo elabitur anguis
Circum, perque duas in morem fluminis arctos.
Georgics, *B.* 1. *V.* 244.

v. 782. *By various Omens*] *Homer* likewiſe calls this Impotence and Suſpenſion of the animal Powers, occaſioned by ſudden Fear, an Omen.

Some ſtrange Diſaſter, ſome Reverſe of Fate
(Ye Gods avert it) threats the *Trojan* State.
Far be the Omen, which my Thoughts ſuggeſt!
Pope's Iliad, *B.* 22. 583.

She rolls her quick-diſcerning Eyes around,
And carefully inſpects the fatal Ground;
Then lifts her ſhrill-reſounding Voice on high
In well known Sounds, but meets with no Reply.
What could ſhe do?—no recent Marks remain
To guide her Footſteps o'er the trackleſs Plain.
Roll'd up on Earth the circling Monſter lies,
An Acre ſcarcely bounds his ample Size.
Him as the Princeſs unſuſpecting view'd,
With ſudden Shrieks ſhe rends the ſpacious Wood.
Unmov'd, the Monſter keeps his former Poſt,
Her piercing Clamours reach th' *Argolic* Hoſt,
Sent by the King, th' *Arcadian* Hero learn'd
The fatal Cauſe, and with the Chiefs return'd;
Soon as the Glare of Arms the Monſter ſpies,
And hears the growing Thunder of their Cries,
He rears his Creſt, and with a fi'ry Glance
Expects th' Aſſailant's terrible Advance.
Firſt ſtoops *Hippomedon*, and from the Fields,
Heav'd with vaſt Force, a rocky Fragment wields.
Vaſt was the Maſs of Stone, the common Bound
Of neighb'ring Fields, and Barrier of the Ground.
As when by vaſt Machines a pond'rous Stone
Deſcending on ſome hoſtile Gate is thrown;
Thus fell the craggy Rock, but fell in vain,
And made a deep Impreſſion on the Plain.

v. 803. *The common Bound*] The ancient Poets, to raiſe our Ideas of the Weight and Magnitude of any Stone, generally call it a Land-Mark.

——— Campo quod forte jacebat
Limes agro poſitus, litem ut diſcerneret arvis.
Virgil's Æneid, Lib. 12. *Ver.* 897.

The

The Field reſounds, and Leaves and Branches torn
Aloft in Air with horrid Craſh are borne.
Tho' late in vain aſſail'd, my keener Dart
Shall thro' thy Scales a fatal Wound impart,
Whether thou art the Guardian of the Grove,
Or, what I wiſh, the Property of *Jove*,
(The vaunting *Capaneus* exclaims aloud,
And ruſhes foremoſt of the Warriour-Crowd)
Swift thro' his gaping Jaws the Jav'lin glides,
And the rough Texture of his Tongue divides;
The Point was ſeen above his creſted Head,
Then ſtains the Ground with goary Filth diſpread.
The furious Monſter, unappall'd with Pain,
In rapid Mazes bounds along the Plain,
Then, wrench'd the Jav'lin from his bleeding Head,
Swift to the Temple of his Patron fled:

v. 811. *Tho' late in vain aſſail'd*] What a beautiful Tranſition is this from the pathetic Deſcription of the Death of *Archemorus!*—— We are alarmed with the ſudden Interpoſition of *Capaneus:* he breaks in upon us like a Flaſh of Lightning, and ſurprizes the Reader, who was unprepared for it. While *Hippomedon* and the other Heroes are content with throwing Stones at a Diſtance, *Capaneus*, like a true Deſcendant of *Mars*, advances with Spear in Hand, and not only threats, but puts his Threats in Execution. However, the chief Beauty of it, which conſiſts in the ſudden and abrupt Turn of the Addreſs, had been entirely loſt, if the Poet had followed the uſual Forms and ſaid, 'Then *Capaneus* ruſhes with his Spear, and 'begins as follows.'—There are more Inſtances of this Elegancy in *Statius*, than any Author we know of, as indeed he has a greater Share of Vivacity.

v. 824. *To the Temple*] *Virgil* has obſerved the ſame of the Serpents that ſlew *Laocoon* in his ſecond Æneid.

> At gemini lapſu delubra ad ſumma Dracones
> Effugiunt, ſævæque petunt Tritonidis arces:
> Sub pedibuſque Deæ, clypeique ſub orbe teguntur. *V.* 225.

Here long he ſtruggles in the Pangs of Death,
In hiſſing Threats at length reſigns his Breath.
Him *Lerna*'s Lakes in gentle Murmurs mourn,
And *Nemea*, by his frequent Windings worn:
Him ev'ry Nymph, that late was wont to bring
Her early Tribute from the rifled Spring:
For him the Fauns were ſeen to break their Reeds,
And tear the leafy Honours from their Heads.
E'en *Jove* himſelf the faſhion'd Bolt demands,
And ſcarce withholds his all-avenging Hands,
Till the Blaſphemer in Proceſs of Time
Should merit Vengeance for a greater Crime:
Yet then a flaſhing Ray was ſeen to graze
His beaming Helmet, and augment the Blaze.
As now *Hypſipyle*, the Serpent ſlain,
Seeks her loſt Infant on the ſpacious Plain,
Upon a diſtant Eminence ſhe ſpy'd
The with'ring Graſs with Drops of Slaughter dy'd:
Hither in Haſte the beauteous Mourner flies,
And ſoon, too ſoon the killing Object eyes.
In vain from Words ſhe ſeeks a ſhort Relief,
In vain in Tears to vent her ſwelling Grief;
Short of its Courſe the pearly Current hung,
And to the Roof inactive cleaves the Tongue.
One while ſhe kiſſes his diſcolour'd Cheeks,
Then thro' his Limbs Life's luke-warm Paſſage ſeeks,
In vain his Face and Breaſt miſplac'd, are drown'd
In Blood, and the whole Body ſeems one Wound.
As when the Bird, whoſe Neſt in Search of Food
Some Serpent climb'd, and cruſh'd the tender Brood,

v. 853. *As when the Bird*] *Virgil* has a beautiful Simile of the ſame Kind with this in *Statius*, thus excellently tranſlated by the Duke of *Buckingham*,

So

Returning, finds her clam'rous Infants gone,
And Blood and ſcatter'd Feathers left alone,
She drops the Meat, and ſpurns the Neſt away;
The Grove reſponſive ecchoes to her Lay.
Soon as the Wretch had in her Lap with Care
Repos'd his Limbs, and dry'd them with her Hair,
Her Voice, releas'd from ſad Exceſs of Grief,
A Paſſage found, and thus ſhe ſought Relief.
O thou, whoſe Form and Features oft have brought
My own dear Offspring's Image to my Thought,
Whoſe ſoft Careſſes could alone abate
The Pangs of Exile and a ſervile State:
Say, whence theſe Wounds? what God could thus diſgrace
Thy faultleſs Figure, and thy Charms efface?
I left thee freſh in Life, in Beauty gay,
Engag'd in Pleaſure, and amus'd with Play.
Where now are all thoſe ſweet Attempts to ſpeak,
The ſparkling Eye and Roſe-reſembling Cheek?

So the ſad Nightingale, when childleſs made
By ſome rough Swain, who ſtole her young away,
Bewails her Loſs beneath a Poplar Shade,
Mourns all the Night, in Murmurs waſtes the Day.
Her melting Songs a doleful Pleaſure yield,
And melancholy Muſic fills the Field.

Taſſo has likewiſe copied it.

Come Uſignuol, cui'l villan duro invole
Dal nido i figli non pennuti ancora;
Che in miſerabil canto afflitte, e ſole
Pinge le notti, e n' empie i boſchi, e l'ora.
Al fin col novo dì rinchiude alquanto
I lumi, e'l ſonno in lor ſerpe fra'l pianto.
Gieruſal. Lib. Canto 12. *St.* 90.

v. 871. *Where now are*] This is ſomething like that beautiful Exclamation in *Horace*.

Quo fugit Venus heu? quove color? decens

Where are thoſe artful Smiles, that liſping Tone
To me addreſs'd, and known to me alone?
How to procure thee Slumbers did I toil,
And talk of *Argo*, and thy native Soil.
How have I preſs'd thee in my folding Arms,
And gaz'd and doated on thy budding Charms?
Thus ſooth'd, I could forget I was a Slave;
To thee my Breaſt, another's Right, I gave:
Now ready to thy Mouth deſcends again
The middle Current, but deſcends in vain.
Nor were there Omens wanting to diſcloſe
His Fate, and warn me of impending Woes:
Amidſt the duſky Horrors of the Night
The *Cyprian* Goddeſs ſtood confeſt to Sight.
But why ſhould I the fatal Act diſclaim,
And to the guiltleſs Gods transfer the Blame?
My ſpeedy Death ſhall for the Crime atone,
'Tis thus decreed, nor ſeek I Death to ſhun.
Say, could I thus forget my precious Care,
While, urg'd by vain Ambition, I declare
My daring Country's Fortune and my own,
And court the tranſient Blazes of Renown.

Quo motus? quid habes illius, illius,
Quæ ſpirabat amores,
Quæ me ſurpuerat mihi. *Lib.* 4. *Ode* 13.

v. 883. *Nor were there Omens*] As far as we can infer from the Writings of *Statius*, he was very ſuperſtitious. All the Perſonages, who have a Place in his Poem, lay a great Streſs on Omens, and after any Calamity has happened to them, always recollect ſome Viſion that portended it. The Correction that follows has a very beautiful Effect. Upon the whole, we may conclude this Oration to be a Maſterpiece in the pathetic Way. That of *Eurialus's* Mother in the 9th Book of the *Æneid*, and of *Andromache* in the 22d of the *Iliad* are the only ones that can ſtand in Competition with it.

Lemnos,

Lemnos, no more againſt thy Queen exclaim,
Our Guilt is equal, our Diſgrace the ſame.
If this Intreaty merits your Regard,
If my paſt Service claims this ſmall Reward,
Lead me, O quickly to the Serpent lead,
Or with your Swords abſolve my impious Deed.
Oh! never may theſe Eyes behold again
The Sire, or injur'd Partner of his Reign:
Tho' (what can ſcarcely merit your Belief)
My own would equal her ſevereſt Grief.
Ere from theſe Hands ſhe take th' ungrateful Load,
Th' ungrateful Load, unhappily beſtow'd;
May yawning Earth a ſudden Paſſage rend,
And let me thro' the dark Abyſs deſcend.
The Princeſs ſpoke, and, frantic with Deſpair,
Deforms with Blood her Face, with Duſt her Hair;
Then blames the grieving Warriors, in whoſe Cauſe
She left the Babe, too ſtudious of Applauſe.
And now the News had reach'd the Monarch's Ears,
And fill'd the royal Dome with ſudden Tears.
Lycurgus, on that inauſpicious Day,
From the *Perſean* Mountain bent his Way;
Where angry Entrails burnt beneath the Shade
To th' unregarding Thunderer were paid.

v. 920. *Deforms with Blood her Face*] This Method of expreſſing Sorrow was very cuſtomary among the Orientals. We have frequent Mention of it in the ſacred and profane Writers. *Homer*, in the 18th Book of his *Iliad* ſays,

Αμφοτερησι δε χερσιν ελα κονιν αιθαλοεσσαν,
Χ υατο κακκεφαλης.

And again in the 22d,

Παντας δ' ελλιταινε κυλινδομενω κατα κοπρον.

v. 927. *Entrails burnt*] Theſe Pieces of Meat were called *Proſecta* by the *Romans*, and divided into three Portions. The firſt was burnt; the

All Commerce with *Adraſtus* he declin'd,
Nor in the Council, or the Battle join'd.
Not void of martial Courage was his Breaſt,
But Piety the Love of War ſuppreſs'd.
Beſides the God's Reſponſe, with Council fraught,
Long lay revolving in his anxious Thought.
Lycurgus firſt (the ſacred Voice reveal'd)
A Burial in the *Theban* War ſhall yield.
On this he dwelt, and erring in his Fate,
Preferr'd a peaceful Life, and neutral State.
Yet, when he heard the Clarion's loud Alarms,
Wiſhes to ſheathe his Limbs in fatal Arms.
But ſoon the doubtful Oracle is clear'd,
As the ſad Exequies in Sight appear'd.
Hypſipyle the ſlow Proceſſion leads,
Met by the Queen, array'd in ſable Weeds.
But pious Cares no longer now withhold
The Father, from his new Misfortunes bold.

the ſecond, conſecrated and given to the Prieſts: and the third, eaten by the Perſon who made the Sacrifice and his Family. *Suetonius* in the Life of *Auguſtus* ſays, 'Cum fortè Marti rem divinam 'faceret, nunciatâ repente hoſtis incurſione, ſemicruda exta rapta 'foco proſecuit, atque ita prælium ingreſſus victor rediit.' See *Arnobius, Lib.* 2. *Adverſus Gent.* & *Adrian Turnebus, Adverſariorum, Lib.* 15. *Cap.* 7. *Bernartius.*

v. 935. Lycurgus *firſt*] It is very remarkable in Favour of Chriſtianity, that all the Oracles of the Heathens were delivered in ſo ambiguous a Manner as to admit of a double Meaning. Such was the Anſwer from the *Delphic* to *Cræſus* King of *Lydia* and *Appius* the Prætor of *Achaia*, who thinking the Oracle had warned him only to refrain from the War between *Cæſar* and *Pompey*, retired into the Country called *Cæla Eubœa*, where, before the Battle of *Pharſalia*, he died of a Diſeaſe, and was there buried, and ſo poſſeſſed quietly the Place which the Oracle had promiſed him.

An angry, not a ſorrowing Look he wears,
And Rage denies a Paſſage to his Tears.
Swift as a Tiger, o'er the Fields he flies,
And thus aloud to his Domeſtics cries.
Where is this faithleſs Wretch, this female Foe,
That ſpills my Blood, and triumphs in my Woe?
Say, lives ſhe? breathes ſhe yet the vital Air,
Seize her, and quick, my Friends, to Vengeance bear,
No longer let her well-invented Tale,
And vain Impoſtures o'er your Faith prevail.
The Monarch ſpoke, and from the Sheath diſplay'd
The dreadful Splendors of his ſlaught'ring Blade;
But interpoſing *Tydeus* ruſh'd between,
And with his Shield protects the *Lemnian* Queen;
Then ſhouts aloud: whoe'er thou art, forbear,
Nor tempt the Fury of my thirſting Spear.
Him ſtern *Hippomedon*, in Arms renown'd,
Th' *Arcadian* Youth, and *Capaneus* ſurround.
Their Swords, impatient for the promis'd War,
With dazzling Luſtre glitter from afar.
To aid their King the gath'ring Swains oppoſe,
And menace their inhoſpitable Foes.
Then mild *Adraſtus*, mingling with the Crowd,
And good *Oeclides* thus exclaims aloud.

v. 960. *And with his Shield*] The Commentators have puzzled themſelves to find out a Supplement to the Line.

Impiger objectâ ——— Pectora parmâ

One voting for *proturbat*, another for *protentat*, and a third for *ſuſtentat*. Inſtead of weighing the reſpective Arguments of each Critic, and endeavouring to ſettle the true Reading, we ſhall be content with conveying the chief Idea, which is that of *Hypſipyle*'s Deliverance, in our Verſion.

O ſheathe

O ſheathe your Swords, my Friends, contend no more,
Nor ſtain your impious Arms in kindred Gore.
To this *Oenides*, unappeas'd, replies,
(The Spark of Anger beaming from his Eyes)
Dar'ſt thou, O Tyrant, lift that guilty Hand
Againſt the Saviour of the *Grecian* Band;
Will they, who this their preſent Ardor owe
To her alone, reſign her to the Foe?
Know, that from *Bacchus* by Deſcent ſhe ſprings,
And claims Alliance with the Race of Kings.
Is Peace ſo ſlight a Favour, whilſt in Arms
Thy Subjects riſe, impell'd with falſe Alarms?
Yet ſtill may'ſt thou enjoy it, and again
Theſe Troops behold thee weeping for the Slain.
He paus'd: when, now his Wrath in Part ſuppreſt,
Lycurgus thus the liſt'ning Kings addreſt:
Little I deem'd, that when you bent your Courſe
To *Thebes*, we too ſhould prove your hoſtile Force.
But come, if ſocial Blood alone can pleaſe,
On us, our Wives and harmleſs Children ſeize.
From theſe to Deeds of deeper Guilt aſpire,
And wrap our unavailing Fanes in Fire.
Still for itſelf will Pow'r ſuperior plead,
And ſanctify the moſt illegal Deed.
Will future Times acknowledge your Pretence,
And think you combat in a Slave's Defence?
Yet Vengeance waits you from the Pow'rs above,
And ſure, tho' tardy, is the Wrath of *Jove*.

v. 972. *Nor ſtain your impious Arms in kindred Gore*] The whole Nation of the *Greeks* was deſcended from *Perſeus*, the Son of *Danaus*, from whom they were called *Danai*.

v. 998. *And ſure tho' tardy*] This is a Tranſlation of the following Lines in *Tibullus*, as *Lactantius* has remarked.

Ah!

He ſaid, and to the City turn'd his Eyes,
And there freſh Scenes of Blood and Rage deſcries.
But Fame unrivall'd in the duſty Courſe,
In Fleetneſs far outſtrips the vig'rous Horſe;
From either Wing ſhe ſhakes the noxious Seeds
Of Diſcord, as aloft in Air ſhe ſpeeds:
While from a thouſand Voices ſhe proclaims
The Monarch's Vengeance, and the Crowd inflames.
Too credulous, nor patient of Delay,
With Darts and Torches they provoke the Fray,
Demand *Lycurgus*, and advance in Haſte
To ſpoil the Fanes, and lay the Kingdom Waſte.
The ſcreaming Females rend the vaulted Sphere,
And their firſt Grief is loſt in abject Fear.
But old *Adraſtus*, glitt'ring in his Car,
Rode thro' the crimſon Ranks of noiſy War:
The mournful Queen of *Lemnos* preſs'd his Side,
Deſiſt, deſiſt from Arms (aloud he cry'd)
No more let vengeful Thoughts employ your Care,
Lo, our Protectreſs breathes the vital Air.
Thus, when the ſtormy South, and rapid North,
From their *Æolian* Caverns iſſuing forth,

Ah! miſeret, ſi quis primo perjuria celat,
Sera tamen tacitis pœna venit pedibus. *Eleg. p.* 2. 11.

1001. *But Fame*] This Deſcription, which affords a ſignal Inſtance of our Author's Sublimity, is not the worſe for its Conciſeneſs. It is entirely devoid of that tinſel, flaſhy Splendor (which will paſs a curſory View only, and cannot ſtand the Teſt of ſevere Criticiſm;) and grows in our Eſteem from every Reviſal. The Image of Fame ſhaking the Seeds of Diſcord from her Wings, is very exalted, and the Epithet *either* exquiſitely beautiful, as it conveys to us the Idea of the two different Conflicts. What we value it the more for is, that it is an Original, and has nothing in Common with that celebrated Deſcription in the 4th Book of the *Æneid*.

v. 1019. *Thus, when the ſtormy South*] This Simile is taken from *Virgil*, though the Compariſon of the *Thebaid* is the Thing compared in the *Æneid*.

Ac

With ſable Clouds the Face of Heav'n deform,
And Ocean groans beneath th' incumbent Storm;
If *Neptune* in his coral Car appear,
And his hoar Head above the Surface rear;
The Seas unruffling ſpread a level Plain,
Exult and own the Monarch of the Main;
And, as the Tempeſt and the Waves ſubſide,
The Shores and Mountains are again deſcry'd.
What God, propitious to her pious Vows,
Recall'd the fair *Hypſipyle*'s Repoſe,
'Twas *Bacchus*, Author of her noble Race,
Who ſent the double Pledge of her Embrace,
For Deeds yet rip'ning in the Womb of Time;
Their Mother brought them from their native Clime.
Soon as the Warders of the Gates afford
Admiſſion to their now leſs angry Lord,
Wafted by adverſe Fame, the dire Report
Of ſlain *Archemorus* had reach'd the Court.

Ac veluti magno in populo cum ſæpe coorta eſt
Seditio, ſævitque animis ignobile vulgus;
Jamque faces & ſaxa volant; furor arma miniſtrat:
Tum, pietate gravem ac meritis ſi forte virum quem
Conſpexêre, ſilent, arrectiſque auribus aſtant,
Ille regit dictis animos, & pectora mulcet.
Sic cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor: æquora poſtquam
Proſpiciens genitor, cœloque invectus aperto
Flectit equos, curruque volans dat lora ſecundo.
Æneid 1. *V.* 152.

v. 1032. *The double Pledge*] *Ovid* confirms our Author's Aſſertion of *Hypſipyle*'s Twins.

Nunc etiam peperi, gratare ambobus Jaſon,
Dulce mihi gravidæ fecerat auctor onus.
Fælix in numero quòque ſum, prolemque gemellam
Pignora Lucinâ bina favente dedi.
Jas. to *Hypſ. Ver.* 119.

Therefore,

Therefore, t'inhance the Juſtice of their Claim
In the King's Cauſe they ſeek the Field of Fame.
So blind are Mortals to the future State,
So ſudden the Viciſſitudes of Fate!
But, as the Sound of *Lemnos* reach'd their Ears,
They pierce the thick'ning Crowd, devoid of Fears;
Diſcern their Mother in the noiſy Ring,
And round her Neck, the Tears faſt falling, cling.
She, like a Rock, ſtands moveleſs, nor again
Dares truſt the Gods ſo oft believ'd in vain.
But, as in them ſhe trac'd their Father's Charms,
And ſaw himſelf engrav'd upon their Arms;
Her Grief abates, and impotent to bear
The Change of Fortune which the Gods prepare;
Proſtrate ſhe falls, and as on Earth ſhe lies,
The Streams of Joy ſwift iſſue from her Eyes.
To chear his Iſſue, from a ruddy Cloud
The God of Wine ſalutes her thrice aloud:
The Shouts of *Bacchanals* were heard on high,
And Drums and Cymbals ſhook the lab'ring Sky.
At length the Son of *Oecleus*, Audience gain'd,
With Words like theſe the liſt'ning Hoſt detain'd.
Attend, ye Princes, and *Argolic* Bands,
To what *Apollo* by his Prieſt commands.
The preſent Miſeries, which we deplore,
Were by the Fates predeſtin'd, when of Yore

v. 1055. *To chear his Iſſue*] This Fiction ſeems borrowed from *Virgil*, who introduces *Venus* giving her Son *Æneas* the ſame Aſſurances of Protection.

> Ni ſignum cœlo Cytherea dediſſet aperto.
> Namque improviſo vibratus ab æthere fulgor
> Cum ſonitu venit; & ruere omnia viſa repente,
> Tyrrhenæque tubæ mugire per æthera clangor.

The future they diſpos'd with certain Hand,
And bade the neceſſary Cauſes ſtand.
Hence were the Springs exhauſted, hence aroſe
The deathful Serpent, Author of our Woes,
Hence was *Archemorus* depriv'd of Breath,
His Name deduc'd from his preluding Death.
Here we muſt halt, and conſecrate to Fame
The royal Infant, this his Merits claim:
Let Honours recompenſe his early Doom,
And Virtue pour Libations o'er his Tomb.
And oh! that *Sol* would lengthen out the Way,
And clog our Progreſs with a freſh Delay;
That Accidents would intervene anew,
And *Thebes* retreat as faſt as we purſue.
But you, who prove a more than common Fate,
(Your Son exalted to celeſtial State)
Whoſe honour'd Name ſhall with Oblivion ſtrive,
And thro' each future Age diſtinguiſh'd live,
While *Inachus* and noxious *Lerna* flow,
And *Nemea*'s Boughs o'erſhade the Fields below;
Let not your Tears a Deity diſgrace;
A Deity, tho' of terreſtrial Race?
Far better his untimely Death appears
Than *Neſtor*'s Age, and *Tithon*'s Length of Years.
While thus he ſpoke, encircling Shades ariſe,
And Night aſſumes the Sceptre of the Skies.

v. 1083. *While* Inachus] *Virgil* expreſſes himſelf in the ſame periphraſtical Manner.

> In freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbræ
> Luſtrabunt convexa, polus dum ſidera paſcet,
> Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudeſque manebunt.
>
> *Æneid, B.* 1. *V.* 611.

v. 1088. *Tithon's Length of Years*] *Tithon* was the Son of *Laomedon*, and raviſhed by *Aurora* for his Beauty in *Ethiopia*, who reſtored his Youth and Beauty when he was grown old: He was at laſt turned into a Graſshopper.

THE

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

THE ARGUMENT.

ADRASTUS *and the* Grecian *Princes, together with* Lycurgus, Eurydice, *and* Hypſipyle *celebrate the Obſequies of* Archemorus, *in which is included a particular Deſcription of their felling Wood, of the funeral Proceſſion, and the Lamentation of* Eurydice. Lycurgus *and his Conſort are with Difficulty reſtrained from leaping upon the funeral Pyre. They throw in Jewels, Gold, live Animals, Spices, and many other Things of great Value. A ſelect Company of Horſe and Foot are ordered to march round the Pile. They afterwards erect a Monument to the Infant, on which his whole Hiſtory is engraved.* Adraſtus *inſtitutes funeral Games, and appoints Prizes to thoſe who ſhall conquer in them. The Statues of their Anceſtors are carried along in Proceſſion, and expoſed to public View. Then follow the Chariot-Race, the Foot-Race, the throwing the Diſcus or Quoit, the Combat of the* Cæſtus, *the Wreſtling, and the Shooting with Arrows, which is attended with an Omen, and concludes this Book.*

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And thro' th' *Argolic* Towns a Rumour ſpread,
That grateful *Greece* prepar'd funereal Games,
And various Meeds, as various Merit claims,
Games, in which Nature might be crown'd with Art,
And Skill to inbred Strength a Grace impart,
Achaia's wonted Rite.——*Alcmena*'s Son
On *Piſa*'s Plain the pious Strife begun,
To honour *Pelops*' and with Conqueſt crown'd,
His duſty Locks with Wreaths of Olive bound:

v. 1. *Now Fame*] This Book, which is entirely taken up in deſcribing the Games exhibited at the Funeral of *Archemorus* anſwers to the 24th of the *Iliad* and the 5th of the *Æneid*. I have given my Opinion of it in the Diſſertation, prefixed to this Work, and ſhall therefore ſay nothing farther upon its general Merit.

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Next *Phocis*, from the Serpent's Windings freed,
To Youths the Prize of Archery decreed:
Then round *Palæmon*'s Altars much bewept
The Time-firm'd Rites were ſcrupulouſly kept,
Oft as *Leucothëa* her Groans renews,
And at their Feaſts her friendly Viſage ſhews;
Her Woes with Wailings either *Iſthmus* moans;
Thebes ecchoes back her Shrieks and mimick'd Groans.
And now the mighty Kings, whoſe royal Birth
Exalts fair *Argos* o'er the foodful Earth,
And whoſe illuſtrious Feats the *Tyrian* Dames,
Deep-ſighing, hear, and glow with various Flames;
Thoſe mighty Kings with em'lous Rage contend,
And to the Fight their naked Vigour bend.
So Gallies, ere with lab'ring Oars they ſweep
The ſtormy *Tyrrhene*, or *Ægean* Deep,
In ſome calm Stream their Oars and Helm explore,
And learn their Art, preluding near the Shore;
But, well-experienc'd, tempt remoter Seas,
Nor miſs the Land, they loſe by ſwift Degrees.
Aurora now, in early Chariot drawn,
Beam'd forth her Radiance on the dewy Lawn,

v. 22. *Deep-ſighing*] The Expreſſion in the Original is *ſuſpirant*, which, in all Probability, was taken from *Horace*'s Ode the 2d of the 3d Book.

——— Illum ex mœnibus hoſticis
Matrona bellantis Tyranni
Proſpiciens et adulta virgo,
Suſpiret eheu! ne rudis agminum, *&c.*

Upon which Mr. *Francis* ſeems to think, that the Image is drawn from the 3d Book of *Homer*'s *Iliad*, where *Helen* and the *Trojan* Dames appear upon the Walls to view the Camp of the *Greeks*.

Whilſt Sleep with Grief beheld his empty'd Horn,
And paler *Phœbe* fled th' Approach of Morn.
With Yells the Streets, with Groans the mournful Courts
Rebellow.——Eccho with their Sorrow ſports;
From Hill to Hill, from Grove to Grove ſhe bounds,
And catches, breaks, and multiplies the Sounds.
The Badge of Honour from his Forehead torn,
The Father ſits all chearleſs and forlorn,
In Weeds of Woe array'd, and o'er his Head
And Length of Beard a Show'r of Aſhes ſpread.
Oppos'd to him, the childleſs Mother raves,
And far out-weeps her Lord.———The female Slaves,
Inſpir'd by her Example and Command,
With brimful Eyes around their Miſtreſs ſtand:
Fain would ſhe fall upon her Son's Remains,
While each with friendly Words her Rage reſtrains:
Rous'd by her Clamours too, the Father ſprings
To ſooth her Anguiſh.—Soon as th' *Argive* Kings,
Known by their awful Looks and god-like Port,
Had paſs'd the Threſhold of the dreary Court,
They bare afreſh their Boſoms, and renew
Their Cries, tho' weary: Tears their Cheeks bedew

v. 50. *Soon as the* Argive *King*] The Editor of *Pitt's Virgil* obſerves, that this Circumſtance is imitated from the 11th Book of the *Æneid*, Verſe 36.

> Ut vero Æneas foribus ſeſe intulit altis,
> Ingentem gemitum tunſis ad ſidera tollunt
> Pectoribus, mæſtoque immugit regia luctu.

Catrou remarks on this Paſſage, that it was a Ceremony among the Antients, to renew their Lamentations at the Approach of a King or Perſon of Diſtinction.

With Drop ſucceeding Drop. Their Shrieks rebound
From ev'ry Door with emulated Sound,
As if the Serpent had reviv'd again,
Or with a recent Wound the Infant ſlain.
The *Greeks* perceiv'd the Odium, they deſign'd,
And wept the Weakneſs, common to their Kind.
Adraſtus, oft as ſtupifying Grief
Impoſes Silence, ſtrives to yield Relief
To the diſtracted Sire with ſoft Diſcourſe:
One while he ſhews how vain is human Force,
How hard the Lot of Man. He next explains
The Stableneſs of all that Fate ordains;
And bids him not deſpair, ſince fav'ring *Jove*
May bleſs the future Pledges of his Love.
In vain he urg'd: unknowing Check or Bound,
Their Plaints return'd.——In ſullen Silence frown'd
Th' obdurate Sire, inſenſible of all:
So fell *Ionian* Waves, when Seamen call
For Mercy, their repeated Vows regard:
So ſlender Clouds the Light'ning's Flight retard.
Mean while they crown with Cypreſs, Sign of Drear,
And baleful Yew the Flame-devoted Bier,

v. 72. *So fell* Ionian *Waves, when Seamen call*] This ſeems to be copied from the ſixth Book of *Virgil*'s *Æneid*, Verſe 467, where *Æneas* accoſts *Dido* in the Infernal Regions, and meets with a Rebuff from that Lady.

> Talibus Æneas ardentem et torva tuentem
> Lenibat dictis animum, lacrymasque ciebat,
> Illa ſolo fixos oculos averſa tenebat:
> Nec magis incepto vultum ſermone movetur,
> Quam ſi dura ſilex, aut ſtet Marpeſia cautes.

v. 75. *Mean while they crown with Cypreſs, Sign of Drear.*] This Deſcription, excluſive of its poetical Merit, is a valuable Piece of Antiquity, as it lets us into the Knowledge of the Manner of the *Grecian*

And Infant's Bed: the nether Part receives,
The Ruſtics' Gift, a Heap of Straw and Leaves:
The ſecond Row diſplays the various Pow'rs
Of Art, embroider'd o'er with ſhort-liv'd Flow'rs:
Arabian Spices on the third they ſtrew,
And *Eaſtern* Sweets in laviſh Plenty ſhew;
Incenſe of antient Date, yet free from Hoar,
And Cinnamon, that grew, when *Belus* bore
The regal Sway.——A Carpet wrought of Gold
And richeſt *Tyrian* Die, they next unfold,
And laid it on the Top: from far it ſhone,
Inſtarr'd with Gems, and many a precious Stone.
Amidſt *Acanthus Linus* was inweav'd:
The deathful Dogs their panting Boſoms heav'd.
The Mother held the wond'rous Work in Hate,
And deem'd it om'nous of her Infant's Fate.
Arms too, and Trophies, by their Granſires won
In Fight, where oft the Victor is undone,
They hung around; more proper theſe to grace
Some honour'd Hero of gigantic Race:
But vain and barren Fame in Grief can pleaſe,
And Gifts the Babe's much honour'd Shade appeaſe.
Hence mournful Joys and Rev'rence to their Tears
Ariſe, and Preſents, greater than his Years,
Are brought to dignify the fun'ral Pyre:
For fluſh'd with early Hopes, the fondling Sire
Devoted Quivers, Shafts, and ſhorter Darts,
Untaught as yet to act their guilty Parts.

Grecian Funerals. I hope the Reader will indulge me with the uſe of the Word *Drear*, as I have *Spencer*'s Authority for it, and its Adjective is univerſally adopted.

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Grecian Funerals. I hope the Reader will indulge me with the uſe of the Word *Drear*, as I have *Spencer*'s Authority for it, and its Adjective is univerſally adopted.

Attentive to his Name, ſhe kept him Steeds,
Prov'd in the Courſe, and ſprung of noted Breeds;
Belts, which a greater Round of Waiſt demand,
And Weapons that expect a ſtronger Hand.
Inſatiate Hopes!—what Veſts did ſhe not frame,
Too credulous to his ambiguous Name?
A purple Robe, gay Enſign of his Reign,
And Sceptre, which he might with Eaſe ſuſtain;
All theſe th' impaſſion'd Sire to *Vulcan*'s Blaze
Conſigns, and on the Pile his Scepter lays,
If haply, by indulging thus his Rage,
He might at length the Force of Grief aſſuage:
Mean Time the Augur, as the Rites demand,
From out the Hoſt ſelects an able Band,
In felling Trees their manly Strength to prove,
And heap a Pyre with Ruins of the Grove;
That *Vulcan* might abſolve the guilty Snake,
And for th' ill-omen'd War Atonement make:
'Tis theirs to force thro' *Tempe*'s Gloom a Way,
Hurl *Nemea* down, and bare the Woods to Day.
They level ſtrait a venerable Wood,
That long exempted from the Axe had ſtood;
Thro' *Argos* and *Lycæum* none diſplay'd
A greater Stretch of hoſpitable Shade.

v. 105. *Attentive to his Name*] The Oracle of *Apollo*, which always loved to play upon Words, gave out in a Reſponſe to *Lycurgus*, that his Infant's Fate was expreſſed in his Name, which was *Archemorus*, and being derived from Ἀρχὴ and Μόρος, might either ſignify, that it was his Fate to reign, or that he would be the firſt Perſon that ſhould be ſlain in the *Theban* War.

Prima, Lycurge, dabis Dircæo funera bello.

Ἀρχὴ ſignifying either a Beginning or Government, and Μόρος Fate or Death.

Sacred

Sacred for Length of Time it far extends
Its Branches, nor alone in Age tranſcends
The oldeſt Mortal's Grandſire, but has ſeen
The Nymphs and Fauns, transform'd in Shape and Mien:
Then ſwift Deſtruction caught th' unhappy Grove,
Struck by the ſounding Axe.——The Birds above
Quit their warm Neſts, and Savages their Den,
Rous'd by the Craſh of Trees and Shouts of Men.
The Cypreſs, Winter-proof, *Chaonian* Wood,
The lofty Beech, the Pitch-Tree, *Vulcan*'s Food,

v. 137. *The Cypreſs, Winter-Proof*] This Deſcription of felling the Foreſts, is thought by Mr. *Pope* the beſt in our Author, and copied by *Spencer* and *Taſſo*.

The ſailing Pine, the Cedar proud and tall,
The Vine-prop Elm, the Poplar never dry,
The Builder Oak, ſole King of Foreſts all,
The Aſpin good for Staves, the Cypreſs Funeral,
The Laurel, Meed of mighty Conquerors,
And Poets Sage: the Fir that weepeth ſtill,
The Willow, worn of forlorn Paramours,
The Yeugh, obedient to the Bender's Will,
The Birch for Shafts, the Sallow for the Mill,
The Myrrh, ſweet bleeding in the bitter Wound,
The warlike Beech, the Aſh for nothing ill,
The fruitful Olive, and the Plantane round,
The Carver Holm, the Maple ſeldom inward ſound.
Fairy Queen, B. 1.

Caggion reciſe dai pungenti ferri
Le ſacre palme, e fraſſini ſelvaggi
I funebri Cipreſſi, e i Pini, e i cerri,
L' Elci frondoſe, egli alti Abeti, e i Faggi,
Gli Olmi mariti, a cui tal' or s'appoggia
La Vite, e con piè torto al ciel s'en poggia.
Altri i Taſſi, e le Querce altri percote,
Che mille volte rinovar le chiome,
E mille volte ad ogni incontro immote
L' ire de' venti han rintuzzate, e dome:
Ed altri impoſe alle ſtridenti Rote
D'orni, e di cedri e' odorate ſome;

Laſciano

The Holm, the Yew of deadly Juice, and Oak,
By Time uninjur'd, bow beneath their Stroke;
The Alder, wont to cleave the billowy Flood,
And Aſh, that ſoon will drink of human Blood,
The Fir, th' uncultur'd Aſh, on Mountains found,
The Pine, that breathes forth Fragrance from each Wound,
And married Elm, around whoſe Trunks the Vine
Her Tendrils folds, to Earth their Heads decline.
Earth groans. Such vaſty Heaps of Waſte o'erſpread
Mount *Iſmarus*, when *Boreas* lifts his Head
From his burſt Cave:——not with ſuch rapid Force
Red Sheets of nightly Flame purſue their Courſe
O'er Foreſts, aided by the fanning Wind.
Sylvanus, *Pales*, and the mongrel Kind
Of Satyrs quit with Grief their Seats of Eaſe,
Soft gurgling Rills, cool Grots and ſhady Trees;
Deep groans the Foreſt, as they take their Leave:
Cloſe to the Trees th' embracing Dryads cleave.

Laſciano al ſuon dell' arme al vario grido
E le fere, e gli augei, la tana, e' l nido.
Jeruſ. del. C. 3. V. 76.

The Editor of *Pitt*'s *Virgil* in a Note on the following Verſes of *Virgil*,

Itur in antiquam ſylvam, ſtabula alta ferarum:
Procumbunt piceæ; ſonat icta ſecuribus ilex,
Fraxineæque trabes, cuneis et fiſſile robur
Scinditur; advolvunt ingentes montibus ornos.

obſerves, that the Difference between the Genius of *Virgil* and *Statius* is very viſible on this Occaſion. The latter of whom minutely and at length deſcribes the different Sorts of Trees that were cut down to make the funeral Pile for *Archemorus*. While *Virgil* obſerves his uſual and pregnant Brevity, knowing he had not Leiſure to dwell on this Subject, merely for the Sake of a florid Deſcription. It is obſervable, that *Taſſo* has imitated *Statius* in this very Particular.

Thus,

Thus, when ſome Leader to the Soldier's Rage
Reſigns a Captive Town, they all engage
In Queſt of Spoil, and ere the Trumpets ſound,
The plunder'd City's ſcarcely to be found.
They fell, they bear away, they load the Cars;
Scarce ſuch a Din attends the Work of *Mars*.
And now their equal Toil two Altars rais'd
Of equal Height: one to th' Immortals blaz'd,
And t'other to the chearleſs Ghoſts of Hell,
When the grave Pipe proclaim'd the fun'ral Knell,
Mix'd with the crooked Horn.——In ancient Time
This Mode prevail'd o'er *Phrygia*'s ample Clime.
Pelops, as Fame reports, this Rite proclaim'd
For leſſer Shades, and mournful Dirges fram'd,
Such as were heard, when *Niobe* of old
To *Sypilos* twelve Urns, disfigur'd, roll'd.
The *Grecian* Princes at the Head appear:
The Burial-Gifts and Sacrifice they bear,
And name aloud in Titles of Renown
The pious Honours of their State or Town.
The fun'ral Bed, a Length of Time between,
On youthful Shoulders moves (a ſolemn Scene)
The King ſelected them with cautious Care:
A Shout uncouth ſucceeds and rends the Air.
The Peers of *Lerna* ſafe incloſe their King:
The ſofter Sex, as num'rous, form a Ring
Around the Mother: next the *Lemnian* Queen,
Encircled by no ſlender Troop, is ſeen:
Not mindleſs of the paſt, th' *Inachian* Train
Intrench the mournful Fair: her Sons ſuſtain

v. 172. *To* Sypilos] A River, into which *Niobe* was ſaid to be metamorphoſed, after ſhe was ſlain by *Phœbus* and *Diana*.

v. 185. *Not mindleſs of the paſt*] *Lycurgus* in a Fit of Revenge, made

Her livid Arms, and pleas'd that ſhe is found,
Indulge her Plaints, nor ſet her Grief a Bound.
There, ſoon as ſad *Eurydice*, bereft
Of all her Joys, th' ill-omen'd Dome had left,
From her bare Breaſts theſe artleſs Accents broke,
And, with long Shrieks prefacing, thus ſhe ſpoke.
My Son, I hop'd not to have follow'd here,
Surrounded with *Argolic* Dames, thy Bier;
Nor, frantic as I was, thy Infant-Years
Once made a Part of theſe my Hopes and Fears:
Nought cruel I fore-ween'd, for at this Age
How could the *Theban* War my Thoughts engage?
What God, however ſanguine to deſtroy,
Would ſpill our Blood in Combat for his Joy?
What drew this Curſe upon us? whence aroſe
Such Ills?——no ſlaughter'd Babes diſturb our Foes.
Of Tears and Slaughter I've the Firſt-Fruits found,
Before the Sword is drawn, or Trumpets ſound;
While, void of Thought, and fond, too fond of Reſt,
I truſt my Infant to another's Breaſt.
What could I do? ſhe ſpread a Tale abroad,
Of her old Sire, preſerv'd by pious Fraud.
Lo! the great Heroine, who ſole abjur'd
The Miſchief, vow'd by Oath, and ſafe ſecur'd

made ſeveral Attempts to kill *Hypſipyle*, as the Authoreſs of his Son's Death through her Negligence. See the laſt Book, Verſe 945.

v. 209. *Lo! the great Heroine*] *Dido* caſts a like ſneering Reflection on *Æneas*, after ſhe had diſcovered his Intentions of leaving her.

——— En dextra fidesque
Quem ſecum patrios aiunt portare Penates,
Quem ſubiiſſe humerum confectum ætate parentum!
Book 4. *Verſe* 397.

Her

Her Parent from the furious *Lemnian* Train!
Still does this daring Dame your Faith retain?
Was ſhe ſo pious, who in deſart Grove
Could leave the product of another's Love,
Expos'd on all Sides, in a dang'rous Place,
Where no huge Snake of *Python*'s monſtrous Race
Was needful to deſtroy. Th' inclement Skies,
And empty Terrors might alone ſuffice.
Nor can I blame you.——This diſaſtrous Curſe
Was fated by the Choice of ſuch a Nurſe.
Yet waſt thou kind, my Son, to her alone,
The fonder Parent was as yet unknown:
No Mother's Joys I reap'd of thee: her Call
Was liſten'd to, in Preference of all.
How ſweet thy Plaints, thy Laughter mixt with Tears,
And Murmurs muſt have ſounded in her Ears,
When firſt thy Tongue eſſay'd the Speech of Man,
With thee a Mother's Office ſhe began,
I finiſh it.——But ſhall ſhe thus offend,
Unpuniſh'd, and will ye her Crimes befriend,
O Chiefs?——why bring ye theſe? the fun'ral Pyre,
And burial Rites no uſeleſs Gifts require.
Her, O ye Chiefs! (his Manes aſk no more)
Her to a childleſs Mother's Rage reſtore,
By this firſt Rage of War:——ſo may each Dame
Of *Thebes* lament a Son of equal Fame.
Her Treſſes then ſhe tore, and thus renew'd
Her Pray'rs.——Reſtore, nor think my Soul indu'd
With ſavage Principles, ſo I expire,
With Vengeance cloy'd, and feed the ſelf-ſame Fire.
While thus ſhe ſpake, at Diſtance ſhe beheld
Hypſipyle, whoſe Grief no Reaſon quell'd,

On

On Hair and Boſom vented.——This eſpy'd,
Ill brooking Partnerſhip in Woe, ſhe cry'd,
This Crime at leaſt, Ye Peers, and thou, O King,
To whom new Honours from our Ruin ſpring,
This Crime forbid, and bear the Traitreſs hence.
Her Preſence gives the ſacred Shade Offence.
Why in theſe Sorrows does ſhe bear a Part,
And with freſh Anguiſh rend a Parent's Heart?
What Alien's Child can ſhe with Truth bemoan,
While thus in cloſe Embrace ſhe graſps her own?
This ſaid, ſhe ſwoons: her Plaints abruptly ceaſe,
And the fair Mourner ſunk to ſudden Peace.
Thus when ſome cruel Swain, or Beaſt of Prey
Has borne a Heifer's half-wean'd Young away,
Whoſe Strength and vital Juices were ſuſtain'd
By milky Nutriment, and Udders drain'd,
The childleſs Parent to the Vales complains,
And queſtions Rivers, Herds, and lonely Plains:
She loaths her Home, retires from Field the laſt,
Nor ere ſhe parts, indulges the Repaſt.
But on the Pile the Sire his Sceptre lays,
And caſts the Thund'rer's Honours in the Blaze;
He then curtails the Locks, that ſcatter'd flow
Adown his Back and Breaſts, a Sign of Woe,

v. 265. *He then curtails*] Mr. *Pope*'s Note on the 166th Verſe of the 23d Book of *Homer*'s *Iliad* is well worth the Reader's Notice. —— 'The Ceremony of cutting off the Hair in Honour of the 'dead, was practiſed not only among the *Greeks*, but alſo among 'other Nations: thus *Statius*, *Thebaid* 6. This Cuſtom is taken 'Notice of in holy Scripture: *Ezekiel* deſcribing a great Lamenta-'tion ſays, they ſhall make themſelves utterly bald for thee, Ch. 27. 'Ver. 31. I believe it was done not only in Token of Sorrow, 'but had perhaps a concealed Meaning: that as the Hair was cut 'from the Head, and was never more to be joined to it, ſo was the 'dead

And ſtrewing o'er the Infant, as he lies,
Weeps pious Tears, and thus, impaſſion'd, cries.
Theſe Ringlets, by a former Contract vow'd,
On thee, perfidious *Jove*, I had beſtow'd;
But ſince the Prieſt deceiv'd me, and my Pray'r
Was loſt, theſe Locks his worthier Shade ſhall bear.
And now, a Torch apply'd beneath, the Fire
Cracks on the leafy Summit of the Pyre.
Scarce can they drive his furious Friends away:
The *Grecians* ſtrait the King's Command obey,
And, ſtanding with protended Arms between,
Exclude the Parents from the mournful Scene.
Vulcan grows rich: no Aſhes e'er before
Were deck'd with ſuch a Maſs of various Ore.

'dead for ever cut from the living, never more to return. I muſt 'obſerve, that this Ceremony of cutting off the Hair was not al-'ways in Token of Sorrow; *Lycophron* in his *Caſſandra*, Ver. 976, 'deſcribing a general Lamentation, ſays

Κρατὸς δ' ἄκερῳ νῶτα καλλύνει φόβη.

'And that the Antients ſometimes had their Hair cut off in Token 'of Joy is evident from *Juvenal*, Sat. 12. Ver. 82.

——— Gaudent ibi vertice raſo
Garrula ſecuri narrare pericula nautæ.

'This ſeeming Contradiction will be ſolved by having Reſpect to 'the different Practices of different Nations. If it was the general 'Cuſtom of any Country to wear long Hair, then the cutting it off 'was a Token of Sorrow; but if it was the Cuſtom to wear ſhort 'Hair, then the letting it grow long and neglecting it, ſhewed, 'that ſuch People were Mourners.'

v. 279. Vulcan *grows rich: no Aſhes e'er before*] This part of the Ceremonies is copied by *Chaucer* in his *Palamon* and *Arcite*, which I ſhall give the Reader in Mr. *Dryden*'s Words.

Rich Jewels in the Flames the wealthy caſt,
While the devouring Fire was burning faſt;
And ſome their Shields, and ſome their Lances threw,
And gave the Warrior's Ghoſt a Warrior's Due.

Full

The Silver melts; the Gems and rich Attire
With Gold embroider'd, crackle in the Fire.
The Planks of hardeſt Oak are ſcented o'er
With *Syrian* Juices: and the honey'd Store
Of many a Hive, and coſtly Saffron crown'd
The Heap. Full Bowls of Milk are hung around.
From Veſſels Boat-wiſe form'd, they pour a Flood
Of Milk yet ſmoaking, mix'd with fable Blood.
The *Grecian* Princes then in Order led
Sev'n equal Troops, to purify the dead;
Around the Pile an hundred Horſemen ride
With Arms revers'd, and compaſs ev'ry Side:
They fac'd the left (for ſo the Rites require)
Bent with the Duſt, the Flames no more aſpire.
Thrice, thus diſpos'd, they wheel'd in Circles round
The hallow'd Corſe: their claſhing Weapons ſound.

Full Bowls of Wine, of Honey, Milk and Blood,
Were pour'd upon the Pile of burning Wood,
And kiſſing Flames receive, and hungry lick the Food.
Then thrice the mounted Squadrons ride around
The Fire, and *Arcite*'s Name they thrice reſound:
Hail and farewell, they ſhouted thrice amain:
Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they turn'd again.
Still as they turn'd, they beat their clatt'ring Shields;
The Women mix their Cries, and Clamour fills the Fields.

Virgil mentions the ſame Circumſtances in the funeral Rites of *Pallas*. *Æn.* 11.

Ter circum accenſos, cincti fulgentibus armis,
Decurrere rogos; ter mœſtum funeris ignem
Luſtravere in equis, ululatusque ore dedere.
Spargitur & tellus lachrymis, ſparguntur et arma.
It cælo clamorque virûm, clangorque tubarum.
Hinc alii ſpolia occiſis direpta Latinis
Conjiciunt igni galeasque, enſesque decoros,
Frænaque, ferventesque rotas; pars munera nota;
Ipſorum clypeos, et non felicia tela. *Ver.* 188.

Four

Four Times their Arms a Craſh tremendous yield,
And female Shrieks re-eccho thro' the Field.
Another Pile, high-heap'd with burning Wood,
For ſlaughter'd Herds and reeking Victims ſtood.
The Prophet warning them to ceaſe their Woes,
And Sign of a new Fun'ral, though he knows
Each Omen true, all wheeling to the Right,
Return: their brandiſh'd Arms reflect the Light.
Each Warrior there ſome grateful Off'ring toſt,
As Fancy dictates: one a Bit emboſs'd,
Another in the Blaze a Helmet threw,
A Belt or Spear, that lighten'd, as it flew.
Each adverſe Field in Concert hoarſe replies:
The Groves are fray'd with their repeated Cries;
While the loud Clarion and ſhrill-ſounding Horn
Pierce the quick Ear with Clangors ſcarcely borne.
Such two vaſt Armies at the Trumpet's Sound,
Ere to its higheſt Pitch their Wrath is wound
By Loſs of Blood, or Slaughter dies the Spear,
All beautiful with equal Arms appear:
Involv'd in Clouds, the Pow'r of Battle ſtands,
And doubts, on whom to turn his conq'ring Hands.
The Rites were cloſ'd, and *Vulcan*'s Fury gone,
A Heap of Aſhes now remain'd alone,
When, drawing near the Fire, a copious Show'r
Of Water on the ſmould'ring Pile they pour.
With early Dawn their pious Toils begun,
And ſcarcely ended with the ſetting Sun.
Nine Times had *Phoſphor* from the Realms of Light
Chac'd the Dew-ſilv'ring Stars and vanquiſh'd Night,

And nine Times, Harbinger of *Cynthia*'s Reign,
Had chang'd his Courſer.——By the conſcious Train
Of Stars, that glitter round the radiant Moon,
He's known to be the ſame at Morn and Noon:
When, ſacred to the Babe, a Tomb aroſe,
Which Art and Speed at once united ſhows:
Stone was the Structure. In a Range diſplay'd,
The Scenes of his ſad Hiſt'ry were pourtray'd.
The Princeſs here the thirſty *Grecians* guides,
To where *Langia* rolls his ſecret Tides.
There creeps the luckleſs Infant, there he lies:
The Serpent writhes his Spires of hideous Size
Around the Verge. You might expect to hear
Him hiſs, ſo well he claſps the marble Spear.
Now Fame invites the Vulgar to the Sight
Of ſportive Conteſts, and a bloodleſs Fight:
Rous'd at the Call, they quit the Fields and Town;
E'en thoſe, to whom War's Horrors are unknown,
Whom Life's exhauſted Prime confin'd at Home,
Shake off old Age, and leave their peaceful Dome.
Ne'er were ſuch Crowds on th' *Ephyræan* Shore,
Or Circus of *Oenomaus* before.
With crooked Hills, and Trees begirt above,
A Vale ſubſides, the Center of a Grove.
Rough, thorny Ridges lie around, which yield
A Length of Shade, and bound it from the Field;
Then Hillocks, riſing through a vaſt Extent
Of graſſy Turf, increaſe the ſteep Aſcent.

v. 328. The Antients thought *Phoſphor* and *Veſper* were not the ſame individual Stars, as they have a different Appearance at their riſing; which the Poet attributes to their changing Horſes. He ſays, therefore, that the Stars are not deceived like Mortals, who ſuppoſed, that they were two diſtinct Stars.

There

There, ſoon as *Phœbus* mark'd the ſylvan Scene
With ruddy Streaks, the martial Troops convene:
'Twas Pleaſure there to meaſure with their Eyes
The Number, Looks, and Habits of th' Allies
Amid the mingled Crowd.——In Wonder loſt,
They view the Strength and Ardor of their Hoſt.
A hundred Bulls of duſky Hue they brought,
The Flow'r of all the Herd, and never wrought;
Then Cows in Number and in Hue the ſame,
And Heifers, not yet horn'd, loud-bellowing, came.
In Order then the Statues of their Sires
Are borne along: the gazing Crowd admires
Their Life-reſembling Form and ſculptur'd Deeds.
Great *Hercules* the mute Proceſſion leads:
To the fell *Nemean* Savage ſhort of Breath,
He fronts his Breaſt, and lifts the Arm of Death.
The *Greeks* with ſome Degree of Horror ey'd
The brazen Hero, tho' their Badge and Pride.
Next, on the left, in Order they diſcern
Old *Inachus*, who pours abroad his Urn,
And, ſtretch'd beneath a lofty Bank of Reeds,
Surveys his Stream ſlow-gliding thro' the Meads.
Ready for Dalliance, *Io* ſtands behind;
Heart-piercing Anguiſh touch'd the Parent's Mind,

v. 365. *In Order then*] Though nothing could be better contrived to excite Virtue in the Breaſts of the *Grecian* Princes and Leaders, than this Exhibition of the Statues and Images of their Anceſtors, yet I fear, it will be thought too long, and had it not been in a Book entirely devoted to Deſcription, it would have been abſolutely unpardonable.

v. 377. *Ready for Dalliance, Io ſtands behind*] The Daughter of *Inachus*, whom *Jupiter* loved, and left his Wife *Juno* ſhould know it, he turned *Io* into an Heifer: jealous *Juno* ſuſpected it, and begged the Heifer of her Husband, and ſet *Argus* (one that had an hun-

As he view'd *Argus*, ſtarr'd with watchful Eyes:
But the more grateful Ruler of the Skies
Prepar'd a Temple on the *Pharian* Shore,
And bade *Aurora* the new Pow'r adore.
Then *Tantalus* (not he who's feign'd to lean
O'er Streams untouch'd, or ſtarve amidſt the Scene
Of Plenty) but the Thund'rer's pious Gueſt
Appears above the Lot of Mortals bleſt.
At Diſtance conq'ring *Pelops* guides the Reins
Of Ocean's God, and thunders o'er the Plains:
Falſe *Myrtil* leaves unpinn'd the Chariot-Wheels,
And Life and Vict'ry from his Maſter ſteals.
Amidſt the reſt was ſage *Acriſius* ſeen,
Chorœbus, Warrior of terrific Mien,
Fair *Danaë*, who blames her guilty Breaſt,
And *Amymone*, in the Stream diſtreſt:
Alcmena too the young *Alcides* bears;
A triple Moon confines her braided Hairs.

dred Eyes) to keep her: *Jupiter* could not refrain, but ſent *Mercury* to kill *Argus*: *Juno*, in Revenge, ſent a Gad-fly that ſtung her and made her mad, ſo that ſhe run to *Egypt*, where her old Form came to her again, and ſhe was married to *Oſiris*; after her Death, the *Egyptians* deified and worſhipped her by the Name of *Iſis*, uſually ſacrificing unto her a Gooſe: when they worſhipped they uſed to call *Io*, *Io*, whence aroſe that Proverb. The Occaſion of the Poet's Fiction concerning *Io*, whom they feigned to be turned into a Cow, was this; *Io* being with Child by a *Phenician* Mariner, and fearing her Father's Diſpleaſure, went with the *Phenicians* into *Egypt* in a Ship which had a painted Bull.

v. 386. *Appears, above the Lot*] *Horace* mentions this Mark of Favour conferred by *Jove* on *Tantalus*.

Occidit & Pelopis genitor conviva Deorum.

v. 396. *A triple Moon confines her braided Hairs*] This triple Moon was ſymbolical of *Jupiter's* exceſſive Luſt, who, when he lay with *Alcmena*, commanded the Moon to make her nightly Courſe thrice as long as uſual.

The

The wrangling Sons of *Belus* join their Hands
In impious Leagues. More mild in Aſpect ſtands
Egyptus, and with ſecret Tranſport hung
On the falſe Flatt'ry of his Brother's Tongue,
Unconſcious of his inward Hate and Spite,
And all the future Horrors of the Night.
A thouſand more were there, yet theſe ſuffice,
When Virtue calls each Rival to the Prize.
Firſt toil'd the Courſers.—Mighty God of Verſe,
Theirs and their princely Maſters' Names rehearſe:
For ne'er was a more gen'rous Race of Steeds
Collected for the Courſe on *Grecian* Meads.
As if a num'rous Flock of Birds ſhould try
Their active Pow'rs, and wing the mid-way Sky,
Or *Æolus* to the mad Winds propoſe
The Palm of Swiftneſs, ſuch a Tumult roſe.
Before them all was fleet *Arion* led,
Diſtinguiſh'd by his Mane of fi'ry Red:
From Ocean's God (if antient Fame ſays true)
The gen'rous Horſe his honour'd Lineage drew;
'Tis ſaid, he rein'd him firſt with forming Hand,
And curbing Bit upon the duſty Strand,
But ſpar'd the Laſh: for free he ſcours the Plain,
Swift as the Surge that ſkims along the Main,
Oft in the Car with other Steeds, deſign'd
To ſwim the *Lybian* Billows, was he join'd,

v. 405. *Firſt toil'd the Courſers*] We ſhall not be ſurprized to ſee *Statius* make this Digreſſion, to give us the Hiſtory of his Horſes, when we conſider to what Exceſs the Paſſion for fine Racers is carried in our own Times, and with what Exactneſs and Preciſion the News-Papers give us their Genealogy.

And train'd to carry his cærulean Sire
To any Coaſt.——The tardier Clouds admire
His active Strength, and each contending Wind,
Notus or *Eurus*, follows far behind.
Amphytrion's val'rous Son with equal Speed
He bore, deep Ruts inſcrib'd upon the Mead,
When for *Euryſtheus* Wars unjuſt he wag'd,
Yet fierce, unmanageably fierce he rag'd:
Then by the Gift of Heav'n, *Adraſtus* rein'd
The Courſer, and to his own Service train'd;
Now, many Cautions giv'n, the Sire decreed
To *Polynices*' Hands the mettled Steed;
He teaches him, what Arts will beſt aſſwage
His Wrath, when chaf'd, and fir'd with em'lous Rage,
'Give not the Reins up freely, nor provoke
'His headſtrong Fury with too frequent Stroke:
'With Threats and Spurs urge others to the Courſe;
'He'll go at Will, and mock thy curbing Force.'
Thus *Phœbus*, when he lent the fi'ry Rein,
And plac'd his Offspring on the rapid Wain,
With boding Tears injoin'd.——Be wiſe, my Son,
Th' untrampled Zones and Stars inſidious ſhun.
With pious Caution firſt the Youth proceeds,
But Fate at length ſets free th' immortal Steeds.
Fir'd with the Proſpect of the ſecond Prize,
Rapt by *Oebalian* Steeds, the Prophet flies;

v. 435. *He teaches him*] *Neſtor* gives a ſimilar Caution to *Antilochus* in the 23d Book of the *Iliad*, on which Paſſage I ſhall refer the Reader to Mr. *Pope*'s Obſervations, as they are equally applicable to this before us.

Thy

Thy Offspring, *Cyllarus*, by Theft obtain'd,
When *Caſtor* on the *Scythian* Coaſt remain'd,
And chang'd *Amyclæ*'s Bridle for the Oar.
A Robe of ſnowy Hue the Augur wore:
White were his Steeds, with Trappings richly dreſt,
The ſame his Helm, his Mitre and his Creſt.
Admetus too, the bliſsful, from the Meads
Of *Theſſaly*, ſcarce curbs his barren Steeds:
From Seed of Centaurs Fame reports them ſprung,
Nor can I diſbelieve it, ſince ſo young,
They ſcorn th' Embraces of the Male: hence Force
Inveſts their Limbs, and Vigour in the Courſe:
Their Sex they thus diſſemble Day and Night,
Black Spots are ſeen betwixt the Streaks of White.
Such was the Colour of each gen'rous Steed,
Nor were they far inferior to the Breed,
Which, liſt'ning to *Apollo*'s tuneful Lays
Forgot their Paſture, loſt in wild Amaze.

v. 449. *Thy Offspring*, Cyllarus] Frauds in the Caſe of Horſes have been thought excuſable in all Times. *Homer* mentions an Inſtance of one in the fifth Book of the *Iliad*.

Τῆ; γάρ τοι γενεῆς, ἣς Τρωὶ πιρ εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
Δῶχ', υἱῷ· ποιιὴν Γανυμηδεύς· ὕνιε' ἀριςοι
Ἵππων, ὅσσοι ἔασιν ὑπ' ἠῶ τ' ἠέλιον τε.
Τῆς γενεῆς ἐκλέψεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγχίσης,
Λαθρη Λαομέδοντος ὑποσχὼν θήλεας ἵππους·
Τῶν οἵ ἓξ ἐγένοντο ἐνὶ μεγάροισι γενέθλης. Verſe 265.

And *Virgil* was ſo well pleaſed with it, as to introduce it in the ſeventh *Æneid*,

Abſenti Æneæ currum geminosque jugales.
Semine ab æthereo, ſpirantes naribus ignem,
Illorum de gente, patri quos dædala Circe
Suppoſitâ de matre nothos furata creavit.

Lo! *Jaſon*'s youthful Sons too, whence new Fame,
And added Honours crown the Mother's Name,
Aſcend the Car, which either *Theas* bore,
The Grandſire's proper Name in Days of Yore,
And call'd from *Euneus*' Omen.——They diſplay,
Like Features, Chariots, Horſes and Array;
The ſame their Vows: each wiſh'd the Palm his own;
Or by his Brother to be won alone.
Next great *Hippodamus* and *Chromis* ride:
One was by Birth to *Hercules* ally'd,
One to *Oenomaus*.—'Twas hard to read,
Which drove the moſt untam'd and headſtrong Steed:
One guides the Stud of *Getic Diomed*,
One thoſe by his *Piſæan* Father bred.
Dire Trophies and the purple Stain of War
With horrid Filth begrime each Hero's Car.
In Lieu of Goals, an Oak on one Side ſtood,
Long ſhorn of Leaves, a naked Trunk of Wood;
On t'other lay (a Barrier of the Ground)
A rocky Fragment, plac'd 'twixt either Bound;
Far as a Dart at four Times we may ſend,
But at three Shots a Shaft might reach the End.
Mean while *Apollo* charm'd the tuneful Throng
Of Siſter-Muſes with celeſtial Song:
The trembling Strings reſponding to his Hands
With ſilver Sound, on higheſt Heav'n he ſtands,
And views *Parnaſſian* Lands, his own Domain.
The Gods were firſt the Subject of his Strain:
To *Jove* and *Phlegra* oft his Lyre he ſtrung,
The *Python*, and his Brother's Honours ſung,
And then explain'd, what Pow'r the Thunder drives,
Fed by what Springs the boundleſs Ocean lives;

Whence Winds ariſe, Stars glide along the Sky,
And River-Gods their empty Urns ſupply:
What Order guides the Sun's impetuous Flight,
Contracts the Day, and lengthens out the Night;
Whether Earth lies the loweſt, or between,
And cloſe encompaſs'd by a World unſeen.
This ended, he delays to hear the Nine
Attune their Lay, and whilſt he tries to twine
A Wreath of well-earn'd Laurel for his Lyre,
And to the Wind reſigns his looſe Attire,
Not diſtant far, brought backward by their Cries,
Nemea, belov'd of *Hercules*, he ſpies,
And there a goodly Sight of gen'rous Steeds,
Yok'd for the Race, and traverſing the Meads.
He knew each princely Rider:——near at Hand
Admetus, and the Prophet took their Stand.
Then to himſelf he ſaid.——What Pow'r above,
Enrag'd againſt theſe Objects of our Love,
Hath urg'd them to diſpute the Prize of Fame?
Their pious Deeds alike my Favour claim.
I cannot well determine, which exceeds;
One, when I ſerv'd him in *Theſſalian* Meads,
(By *Jove* and Fate's imperious Will conſtrain'd)
Burnt Incenſe to his Servant, nor diſdain'd

v. 503. *By a World unſeen*] The Poet alludes here to the *Antipodes*, a Set of Beings, who were ſuppoſed to live Feet to Feet, or diametrically oppoſite to us.——It is ſomewhat remarkable, that Pope *Gregory* excommunicated all ſuch as believed their Exiſtence.

v. 520. *One, when I ſerv'd*] *Apollo* being exiled from Heaven by *Jupiter*, for killing the *Cyclops*, ſerved *Admetus* in the Capacity of Cow-herd nine Years, and having been treated kindly, promiſed him, that when the Time of his Death was come, another ſhould die for him; but he found none that would take his Turn, but his Wife *Alceſte*, whom for her Piety *Proſerpine* reſtored to Life again.

The

The latent God; and one attends in Part
My Rites, a Student of th' ætherial Art.
What tho' *Admetus* in Deſert tranſcend,
Yet honour we the Seer's approaching End;
Late is his Death, the fatal Siſters give
A Length of Years: to thee no Joys ſurvive;
Thou know'ſt, the gloomy Gulph of *Thebes* is near,
For oft our Birds have ſung it in thine Ear.
He ſaid, and ſcarce reſtrain'd the riſing Tears:
Then ſtrait to *Nemea* his Courſe he ſteers,
And gleams at ev'ry Bound o'er all the Skies;
More ſwift than his great Father's Bolt he flies,
Or his own Shafts.—— Long had he trod the Plain,
Yet ſtill the Traces of his Flight remain
Impreſs'd in Heav'n, and thro' th' Expanſe ſerene
And Zephyrs was a Track of Glory ſeen.
Now *Prothous*, by the reſt commiſſion'd, took
The brazen Head-piece, and impartial ſhook

v. 539. *Now* Prothous] Mr. *Pope* in his Verſion of the *Iliad* has tranſcribed a Note of *Euſtathius* on the 427th Line of the 23d Book, which merits the Attention of *Statius*'s Readers likewiſe. 'Accor-'ding to theſe Lots the Charioteers took their Places; but to know 'whether they ſtood all in an equal Front, or one behind another, 'is a Difficulty: *Euſtathius* ſays, the Antients were of Opinion, 'that they did not ſtand in one Front; becauſe it is evident, that 'he who had the firſt Lot had a great Advantage of the other Cha-'rioteers? If he had not, why ſhould *Achilles* caſt Lots? Madam '*Dacier* is of Opinion, that they all ſtood abreaſt to the Barrier, and 'that the firſt would have a ſufficient Advantage, as he was nearer 'the Bound, and ſtood within the reſt; whereas the others muſt take 'a larger Circle, and conſequently were forced to run a greater 'Compaſs of Ground. *Phœnix* was placed as an Inſpector of the 'Race, *i. e.* ſays *Euſtathius*, he was to make Report, whether they 'had obſerved the Laws of the Race in their ſeveral Turnings. *So-'phocles* obſerved the ſame Method with *Homer* in Relation to the In-'ſpectors in his *Electra*.

Or

The Lots together: theſe to all diſpoſe
Their Port and Order, as th' Inſcription ſhows.
Now Men and Steeds, than which no Time or Place
Can greater boaſt the God's acknowledg'd Race,
Stand to one Spot confin'd. Audacious Fear
And paly Hope in ev'ry Face appear:
Doubtful, they tremble, yet contend to ſtart,
And fev'riſh Dread invades their ev'ry Part.
The Steeds' and Horſes' Ardour is the ſame:
Their quiv'ring Eye-balls dart a ceaſeleſs Flame;
They champ the ſounding Bit, their Mouths run o'er
With frothy Foam.——Bars, Gates, and Rails no more
Oppoſe their Progreſs, while their ſtifled Ire,
And Spirit curb'd in Clouds of Smoak tranſpire.
Thus Reſt inglorious galls each gen'rous Heart:
A thouſand Steps are loſt before they ſtart,

——Οι τεταλμενοι βραβεις
Κληροις επιπλαι, και κατεςησαν διφρους.

' The Antients ſay, that the Charioteers ſtarted at the *Sigæum*, where ' the Ships of *Achilles* lay, and ran towards the *Phæteum*, from the ' Ships towards the Shores. But *Ariſtarchus* affirmed that they ran ' in the Compaſs of Ground five *Stadia* (*i. e.* about five Furlongs) ' which lay between the Wall and the Tents towards the Shore.'

v. 545. *Audacious Fear*] So *Virgil*, ſpeaking of the Chariot-Race, ſays,

— Spes arrectæ Juvenum, exultantiaque haurit
Corda pavor pulſans.

v. 556. *A thouſand Steps*] Mr. *Hurd* in his Diſcourſe on poetical Imitation, might have added this Inſtance of *Pope*'s cloſe copying *Statius* to the Examples he has given us, as I think it is rather more ſtriking than any of them. In his *Windſor Foreſt*, ſpeaking of the Courſer, he ſays,

And ere he ſtarts, a thouſand Steps are loſt.

Now it is clear that

——— Pereunt veſtigia mille
Ante fugam.———

are

And they fore run vaſt Tracts of diſtant Ground,
In Proſpect urg'd.——The faithful Grooms ſurround,
Confirm their Courage, ſmooth each tortur'd Mane,
And point the Goal out, they muſt firſt attain.
Soon as the Trumpet had the Signal giv'n,
They ſpring forth all, with em'lous Fury driv'n.
What Weapons ſkim ſo thick th' embattel'd Plain,
What Clouds the Heav'ns, what Sails the billowy Main?
Leſs ſwift are Rivers, ſwoln with wintry Show'rs,
Leſs ſwiftly *Vulcan*'s waſting Flame devours:
Compar'd with theſe, the Stars, the Storms are ſlow,
And Torrents from the Mountain's tardier flow,
The *Greeks* beheld them ſtart, and mark'd their Flight,
Now raviſh'd on a ſudden from their Sight:
Mixt in the Duſt of the diſcolour'd Field,
In one vaſt gloomy Cloud they lie conceal'd,
And, a thick Miſt faſt-gath'ring o'er their Eyes,
They ſcarcely know themſelves by Name or Cries.
The firſt Goal paſt, they kept between them clear
The utmoſt Space allow'd in their Career;
The ſecond Track blots out the former.—Now
Their Boſoms touch the Yoke, ſo prone they bow,
Then they ſeem double, as they pull the Rein
With ſtriving Knees: the Zephyrs ſmooth again
Their Manes erect; their Necks with Muſcles ſwell,
And Earth imbibes the ſnowy Show'r that fell.
From Feet and Wheels ariſe unequal Sounds:
Their Hands ne'er reſt: the Driver's Laſh rebounds

are the very Words of *Statius:* and indeed they were ſo very literally tranſlated by the celebrated Author abovementioned, that I could not help rendering them in his own Words.

In

In ecchoing Air.———Not thicker in the North
Pale *Boreas* ſpreads a ſpatt'ring Tempeſt forth
Of noxious Hail, nor from the Nurſe of *Jove*
So many Show'rs oppreſs the nodding Grove.
In Preſcience vers'd, *Arion* found with Grief
The Rule and Guidance of an unknown Chief,
And, innocent of Ill, perceiv'd with Dread
Th' inceſtuous Offspring of *Jocaſta*'s Bed:
E'en from the Goal the Burden he diſdains,
And frets and flies, impetuous, o'er the Plains.
The Sons of *Argos* think his Spirits riſe
From Praiſes, but the Charioteer he flies;
The Charioteer he threats with furious Speed,
And ſeeks his Lord o'er all the ſpacious Mead.
Before all others, and the next by far,
Amphiaraus guides his glitt'ring Car:
Theſſalia's pious Monarch was deſcry'd
With equal Steps loud thund'ring at his Side.
Thoas and *Euneus*, Brother-Twins ſucceed,
And get and loſe alternately the Lead;
Nor ever does immod'rate Luſt of Fame
Impell them to forget Relation's Claim.
The laſt and greateſt Tryals of the Day
Betwixt *Hippodamus*, and *Chromis* lay;

v. 587. *Nor from the Nurſe of* Jove] The Expreſſion in the Original is

Nec Oleniis manant tot cornibus imbres.

The fabulous Hiſtory of which is as follows.——*Jupiter*, having been fed in *Crete* with the Milk of a Goat belonging to *Amalthæa*, Daughter of *Meliſſus*, King of that Iſland, after the Creature was dead, inſerted it among the Stars, in Gratitude for the Nouriſhment received from it. This Sign was ſuppoſed by the Antients to cauſe Rain.

Their

Their heavy Courſers to the Labour yield,
Nor ignorant of Art, they took the Field:
Hippodamus, whoſe Chariot ſcarce precedes,
Feels on his Back his Rival's breathing Steeds.
The Seer by *Phœbus* lov'd, with nice Survey,
Mark'd out a narrower Compaſs of the Way,
And, drawing in the Reins with all his Force,
Hop'd to prevent *Admetus* in the Courſe.
This the *Theſſalian* views with careful Eyes,
And glows with nearer Proſpect of the Prize,
While fierce *Arion* in his Lord's Deſpight,
Runs circling round, and wanders to the Right.
Oenides now was foremoſt in the Race,
Admetus follows with redoubled Pace,
When, brought at length into the Path again,
The Sea-born Courſer chaces o'er the Plain;
And ſoon o'ertakes the joyful Rivals Cars:
A Craſh enſues, and ſtrikes the golden Stars;
The Heav'ns too tremble, and, the Crowd ſtruck down,
In open View the Seats and Benches ſhone.
But *Polynices* nor commands the Reins,
Nor plies the Whip, for pallid Fear reſtrains:
Thus when frail Reaſon's conquer'd by Deſpair,
The Pilot leaves his Ship to Fortune's Care,

v. 611. Hippodamus] *Homer* gives us the ſame Image *Iliad*, Book 23d, Verſe 376.

Αἱ Φηρητιάδαο πυδώκεες ἔκφερον ἵππους·
Τὰς δὲ μετεξέφερον Διομήδεος ἄρσενες ἵπποι
Τρῶϊοι. ἐδέ τι πολλὸν ἀπεύθ' ἵσαν, ἀλλὰ μάλ' ἐγγύς·
Μὴ γὰρ δίφρῳ ἐπιβῆσ' μήνισιν ἔλκτην,
Πῶλος δ' Εὐμήλοιο μεταφρένων, εὐρέε τ' ὤμω,
Θέῃσιν. ——— ———

The

The Stars that once deceiv'd regards no more,
And gives his Art and uſeleſs Labour o'er.
Again in Rounds, precipitate, they wheel'd,
Then fetch'd a ſhorter Compaſs o'er the Field:
Again on Axles Axles claſh, again
The Wheels on Spokes. No Faith and Peace remain:
Wars, horrid Wars, by far more mild appear;
Such Emulation reigns thro' the Career,
They menace mutual Death, unleſs they yield,
And oft run counter, as they croſs the Field.
When Stripes no more avail, to mend their Speed,
Admetus calls by Name each weary Steed,
Swift *Iris*, *Pholoë* approv'd in War,
And *Thoe*, wont to grace the Victor's Car.
The Prophet too recalls to Senſe of Shame
Cygnus, whoſe ſnowy Colour ſuits his Name,
And *Aſchetos*.——Rous'd at their Maſter's Threat,
The Champain *Strymon* and *Æthion* beat
With quicker Steps———*Hippodamus* provokes
The *Calydonian* with repeated Strokes,
And *Thoas* courts *Podarces*.——Gentle Chief!
The *Theban* Prince alone in ſilent Grief
Obſequious follows, where *Arion* flies,
And fears to publiſh his Miſchance by Cries.
Now thrice th' allotted Compaſs had they run,
And the fourth Heat with Toil was ſcarce begun,

v. 644. Admetus *calls by name*] I think our Author commendable for not reciting Speeches of his Heroes to their Horſes, as *Homer* has done, who makes *Antilochus* ſpeak a great deal in the very Heat and Hurry of the Race. As *Euſtathius* obſerves, he commands and ſoothes, counſels and threatens his Horſes, as if they were rational Creatures.

When

When the chaf'd Steeds, their clammy Throats on Fire,
Breathe ſhort and thick, and copiouſly perſpire,
Till down their Limbs the luke-warm Current glides,
While longthen'd Gaſps diſtend their bellying Sides.
Here Fortune, doubtful long what Chief to grace
With Palm of Conqueſt, haſtes to cloſe the Race.
On great *Æmonius Thoas'* Car runs foul,
While, fir'd with Hope, he gathers all his Soul
To paſs *Admetus:* nor his Brother brought
The wiſh'd-for Aid, tho' earneſtly he ſought;
For fierce *Hippodamus*, of warlike Mien,
Prevented his Effort, and drove between:
Then *Chromis*, back'd with all his Father's Force,
And Strength *Herculean* check'd the rapid Courſe
Of fierce *Hippodamus*, juſt as he gain'd
The inner Barrier, and his Car detain'd,
Axle in Axle lock'd. The ſteeds of *Mars*
Contend in vain to diſengage the Cars,
And ſtretch their muſc'lar Necks: as on the Main
When ſudden Floods *Sicilian* Ships reſtrain.
And *Auſter* drives them with his furious Gales,
In the mid Ocean ſtand their ſwelling Sails.
He then precipitates him from the Car
All ſhiver'd, and had been the firſt by far;
But, as the *Thracian* Tyrant's Horſes found
Their hapleſs Lord, extended on the Ground,
Their raging Luſt of wonted Food returns,
And Thirſt for human Blood redoubled burns;

v. 671. *Then* Chromis, *back'd with all his*] I fear, *Statius* will be cenſured for deſcribing his Warriors ſo exceſſively brutiſh and inhuman in their Conteſts: but let it be remembered, that *Antilochus* in the 23d Book of the *Iliad*, Verſe 423, is equally guilty of ill Treatment with Reſpect to *Menelaus*.

Nor

Nor had he ſcap'd, but the *Tyrinthian* Chief,
Careleſs of Conqueſt, came to his Relief,
And, turning back the Reins and furious Steeds,
Honour'd, tho' vanquiſh'd, ſcours along the Meads.
But *Phœbus*, mindful of his Promiſe, tries
On his lov'd Augur to confer the Prize:
At length he marks the favourable Time,
And headlong ſhoots adown th' etherial Clime;
Juſt as, the Conteſt nearly at an End,
Fair Vict'ry nods, and doubts whom to befriend.
A ſnaky-headed Monſter then he made
Of Air impaſſive, and an empty Shade;
Whether he form'd it in ſome lucky Hour,
Or rais'd from Hell, the viſionary Pow'r
So dire a Shape, ſuch hideous Features rears,
That ſcarce the Furies (ſenſeleſs deem'd of Fears)
And the grim Porter of th' infernal Cell,
Undaunted, might behold a Fiend ſo fell.
It would have fray'd the Steeds, that whirl the Car
Of *Sol*, or bear the God of Arms to War;
For ſoon as her foul Face *Arion* ſpies,
His ſtiff'ning Mane of Gold was ſeen to riſe;

v. 697. *A Snaky-headed Monſter*] This Fiction is imitated from *Virgil*'s *Æneid*, Book 12, Verſe 845.

Dicuntur geminæ peſtes, cognomine diræ;
Quas et tartaream Nox intempeſta Megæram
Uno, eodemque tulit partu, paribusque revinxit
Serpentum ſpiris ventoſasque addidit alas.
Hæ Jovis ad ſolium, ſævique in limine regis
Apparent, acuuntque metum mortalibus ægris,
Si quando lethum horrificum morbosque Deûm rex
Molitur, meritas aut bello territat urbes.
Harum unam celerem demiſit ab æthere ſummo
Jupiter, inque omen Juturnæ occurrere juſſit.

Upright in Air his foremoſt Feet he rears,
And with him his Yoke-Fellows, forceful, bears,
Th' *Aonian* Exile preſſes then the Plains,
And, rolling on his Back, reſigns the Reins:
Confin'd no longer by the Driver's Sway,
The Courſers force the Chariot far away.
Him, lying on the Ground, the *Lemnian* Chief,
Admetus, and the Prophet ey'd with Grief,
And, paſſing ſidelong, took as large a Space,
As was requir'd to ſhun him in the Race.
At length, his truſty Comrades ſtanding round,
He lifts his weary Body from the Ground,
And Head immers'd in Gloom; then ſeeks again
The King, and unexpected, ſoothes his Pain.
How much more bleſt, O *Theban*, had'ſt thou dy'd,
Had not th' inexorable Fiend deny'd?
What Wars had been prevented? th' *Argive* Coaſt,
Thebes, and thy Brother then had mourn'd thee loſt
In public: then had *Nemea* thee bemoan'd,
And *Lerna*'s Banks in hoarſer Concert groan'd;
Lariſſa had thy Tomb with Foliage ſtrew'd,
And young *Archemorus* with Envy view'd.
Oeclides then, altho' the higheſt Meed
Of Right was due to his unrivall'd Speed,
(Since lighted of his Lord, *Arion* flies)
T' o'ertake the empty Car, impetuous hies.
The God recruits his Strength, and cheers his Soul
With Hope:——As if juſt ſtarting from the Goal,
He throws up all the Reins, and drives along
His Steeds with Threats, and now applies the Thong;
While the loud-panting Courſers, far more fleet
Than rapid *Eurus*, ply their ſounding Feet.

Now

Now haſte at leaſt (he cries) while none precedes,
The kindling Axle ſmoaks along the Meads,
And ſcatters Heaps of Sand thrown up afar:
Earth groans, and threats e'en then the gaudy Car.
Perhaps too *Cygnus* then had known the Courſe,
But *Neptune* favours his beloved Horſe:
Hence Glory juſtly grac'd the Victor-Steed,
Tho' the fam'd Augur gain'd the promis'd Meed.
For him two Youths a maſſy Goblet bore,
Which great *Alcides* rear'd in Days of Yore
With his one Hand, when brim'd with ſparkling Wine,
And paid Libations to the Pow'rs divine.
Their Eyes the figur'd Centaurs ſternly roll'd,
And ſtampt an Air of Terror on the Gold.
In Height of Anger at the hoſtile Train
Brands, Stones, and other Bowls they hurl again
On all Sides Faces, pale with haſt'ning Death,
Show Wrath, that lingers with the lateſt Breath:
Hyleus, and the Chief himſelf engage
With far unequal Strength, tho' equal Rage.
To thee, *Admetus*, as the ſecond Meed
A Robe, *Mæonian* Produce, was decreed:
Thrice had it drank the nobleſt *Tyrian* Die,
Fring'd on the Borders.——Here one might deſcry

v. 749. *For him two Youths*] The Chariot Race is now ended; and I cannot but acknowledge, that it contains great variety of natural Incidents, and ſtill greater Pomp of Expreſſion and Harmony of Numbers. However, the Accidents and Circumſtances bear a ſtriking Reſemblance to thoſe of *Homer*; e. g. the Encounter of *Chromis* and *Hippodamus* is ſimilar to that of *Antilochus* and *Menelaus*, and *Apollo*'s ſending a Phantom to frighten the Horſes of *Polynices*, to *Minerva*'s breaking the Chariot of *Eumelus*: nay, our Author is ſo very unpolite to the Ladies, as to undervalue a fair Female, and give her to the Loſer as *Homer* has done to the great Indignation of Madam *Dacier*.

Leander, Youth enamour'd!—as he ſwims,
The Surge Sky-tinctur'd plays around his Limbs:
He oars himſelf with ſhifting Arms, and braves
With his oppoſing Breaſt the ſwelling Waves,
You would not think a ſingle Hair was dry.
In Front of him (deep Anguiſh in her Eye)
The *Seſtian* Damſel on a Turret's Height
Stands, muſing on the Tapers dying Light.
Theſe Gifts *Adraſtus* to the Victors gave,
And chear'd the *Theban* with a female Slave.
He then invites to urge on Foot the Race,
And Meeds aſſigns the Conq'rors Speed to grace:
An uſeful Exerciſe in Time of Peace
At ſacred Rites, nor when thoſe Times ſhall ceaſe
In War unuſeful, when meer Valour fails,
And with ſuperior Arms the Foe prevails.
Firſt *Idas* in the Liſts appears: his Brows
Late ſhaded with *Olympic* Olive-Boughs;
The *Piſans* and *Eleans* back his Cauſe
With previous Shouts, and crown him with Applauſe.
Next *Alcon* (*Sycion* his native Place)
And *Phædimus*, twice Victor in the Race;
Then *Dymas* comes, once fleeter than the Steed,
But Length of Years had leſſen'd half his Speed;
And many others, whom, tho' not the laſt
In Fame, the Vulgar ignorant o'er paſt.

v. 777. *An uſeful Exerciſe in Time*] Monſieur *Catrou* in his Note on the 377th Line of the 5th Book of *Virgil*'s *Æneid*, remarks, that the Foot Race was a military Exerciſe: the young *Roman* Soldiers were inſtructed in it, according to *Vegetius*. Agility being of great Uſe in War.

But the thick Circus for th' *Arcadian* cries;
The ſhifting Murmurs eccho in the Skies.
Mark'd with his Parent's Swiftneſs.—Who will own
Mænalian Atalanta's Name unknown,
And * Footſteps, from her Suitors well-conceal'd? 795
The Mother in her Offspring ſhines reveal'd:
From Pole to Pole his Glory unconfin'd
Extends.——Fame ſays, he caught full many a Hind
In th' open Plain, and ſtopp'd the rapid Courſe
Of Darts and Arrows, ſent with mighty Force. 800
At length th' expected Warrior with a Bound
Springs forth, and leaps, exulting, on the Ground:
Soon as his Robe ungirt aſide he threw,
The lovely Youth unfolds to public View
His well-turn'd Limbs, and falling Shoulders made 805
More beautiful than Art hath e'er pourtray'd:
Tho' all was fair, nor aught admir'd the moſt,
His Face was in his graceful Body loſt.
Yet ſcorning Beauty's Praiſe, he drives away
Th' admiring Crowd, nor patient of Delay, 810
Makes his Limbs ſupple for the future Toil,
And ſtains his Skin with fat *Palladian* Oil.
The reſt avail themſelves of his Deſign:
Smear'd with the Juice, their gloſſy Bodies ſhine.
Thus in a Calm when *Cynthia*'s ſtarry Train 815
Gleam on the placid Surface of the Main;

* By leaving no Marks of them in the Sand.

v. 808. *His Face was in his graceful*] This Obſervation of the Poet tallies with a Remark of Lady *M. W. Montague* in one of her Letters, *viz.* 'that if Women were to go naked their Faces would 'be the leaſt regarded.'

v. 815. *Thus in a Calm when* Cynthia's] This Simile, I muſt confeſs, is one of thoſe *nugæ canoræ*, which according to *Horace*,

And the fair Image of the ſpangled Sphere
Vibrates on Ocean, all Things gay appear;
But brighter over all the Evening Star
Emits his Beams, conſpicuous from afar,
And radiant as in higheſt Heav'n he glows,
Such Splendors in the World of Waters ſhows.
Idas ſucceeds, the next in Form and Fame
Of Speed, and nearly in his Age the ſame:
Yet haſten'd on by Toil, the Down began
To cloathe his Cheeks, and mark the future Man,
And ſome faint Semblance of a Beard was ſeen
Amidſt the Length of Hair, that cloud his Mien.
Then rightly they fore-run th' approaching Race,
Explore their Limbs, and try each various Pace,
Inſtruct themſelves in ev'ry needful Art,
And weigh their Strength and Vigour, ere they ſtart;
They bend their Knees as ready for the Teſt,
And ſtrike with hearty Claps their ſlipp'ry Breaſt,
Then lift their Legs, tho' heated, free and light,
And put a ſudden Period to their Flight.
Soon as the Rule had meaſur'd out the Plain,
And ſmooth'd it to their Feet, the naked Train
Impetuous from the deſtin'd Barrier flew,
And glitter'd in the Sun, like Morning Dew.
The rapid Courſers, that late paſs'd the Mead,
Seem to have run with far inferior Speed.
You'd think, ſo many Arrows from the Throng
Of *Parthians* or *Cydonians* flew along.

ſhould never take Place. There is great Strength of Imagery and Expreſſion in it, but then it no Ways illuſtrates the Thing deſcribed, and has only a general Alluſion to the Effects of the Oil in giving a Gloſs to their Skins, and *Parthenopæus*'s Superiority of Beauty.

Thus

Thus when a Herd of fleet *Hircanian* Deer
In the lone Deſart hear, or ſeem to hear,
The hungry Lion's diſtant Roar, away
They ſcour in Troops, collected by Diſmay,
And blind with Terror; as they beat the Ground,
Their claſhing Horns inceſſantly reſound.
Th' *Arcadian* leads the Race, and as he flies,
Swift as the Wind, eludes their dazzled Eyes:
Him *Idas* preſt, and meas'ring Pace by Pace,
Breath'd on his Shoulders, as he urg'd the Race.
Young *Dymas*, Side by Side, his Rival plies,
And leaves a doubtful Proſpect of the Prize:
Them *Alcon* chaſes.——From th' *Arcadian*'s Crown
A golden Lock of Hair unſhorn hung down;
This for *Diana*, as a Gift, he fed,
From his moſt tender Age, and vainly ſaid,
That on his Country's Altars it ſhould burn,
Should he from *Thebes* a Conqueror return;
Now looſe and flowing largely down behind,
It yields at ev'ry adverſe Blaſt of Wind,
And both impedes himſelf, and (as it flies)
Obſcures his Rival's View, and ſhades his Eyes;
Soon as the Youth perceiv'd th' Advantage giv'n,
And Time for Fraud, with rival Fury driv'n,

v. 867. *Soon as the Youth*] In this Foot Race *Statius* has perhaps ſhewn more Judgment than either *Homer* or *Virgil*. The former makes *Ajax* loſe the Victory through a Fall occaſioned by *Minerva*'s Reſentment of his Diſreſpect in not invoking her (which is ſcarcely *dignus vindice nodus*) in the latter, *Niſus* is unjuſt to his Adverſary in Favour of his Friend, ſo that *Euryalus* wins the Race by a palpable Fraud (as Mr. *Pope* expreſſes it) and yet the Poet gives him the greater Prize. Now the Action of *Idas*'s pulling *Parthenopæus* back, is certainly more natural, and *Adraſtus* acts more impartially and prudently than *Æneas* in making them run again.

(Juſt as th' *Arcadian* Prince with rapid Pace
Approach'd th' extremeſt Limit of the Race)
He ſeiz'd, he pull'd him backward by his Hair,
And touch'd the Goal firſt, baffling all his Care.
Th' *Arcadians* ſtorm'd, and from the Circus bent
Their Steps, and vow'd the Treach'ry to reſent,
Should they refuſe to render to his Hands
The raviſh'd Honours which his Speed demands.
There are, to whom theſe Arts give no Diſguſt,
Mean while *Parthenopæus* heaps with Duſt
And Sand his weeping Eyes and beauteous Face:
The Tears augment and heighten ev'ry Grace.
One while with bloody Nail his Breaſt he tears,
And then his lovely Face and guilty Hairs.
On ev'ry Side diſcordant Clamours riſe,
At length, the Matter weigh'd, *Adraſtus* cries,
O Youths, deſiſt from Strife.—The Prize again
Shall be contended fairly on the Plain;
But take a diff'rent Path: that Side the Field
To guileful *Idas*, this to thee we yield.
No more be Want of Speed by Craft ſupply'd.
The Rivals heard, and by his Words abide,
Then ſuppliant the *Tegæan* Chief adores
Th' immortal Pow'rs, and ſilently implores.
O *Phœbe*, Queen of Foreſts (for to thee
This Lock grew ſacred from my own Decree,
And from this Vow ariſes my Diſgrace)
If aught of Merit in the ſylvan Chace
My Mother has diſplay'd, or aught I claim,
Let not *Arcadia* prove ſuch bitter Shame,
Nor *Thebes* from hence a partial Omen draw,
That *Cynthia* favours thoſe who break her Law.

The

The Goddeſs heard his Pray'r.—Then ſtrait he leaves
The Barrier: ſcarce the Ground his Courſe perceives;
Scarce do his Feet one Grain of Sand diſplace,
Nor in the level Duſt appears his Trace.
He ruſh'd then to the Goal with joyful Cries,
And to the Monarch back exulting, flies:
The promis'd Palm his raging Grief appeas'd.
Now finiſh'd was the Race, and all were pleas'd:
Parthenopæus bore a Steed away
High-bred, the foremoſt Honour of the Day:
The crafty *Idas* a bright Shield poſſeſs'd,
And *Lycian* Shafts, much priz'd, content the reſt.
He then demands, what Warrior, ſkill'd to throw
The Diſk, his Strength of Arm and Art will ſhow?
By the good Monarch *Pterelas* was ſent
To fetch the Premium: his whole Body bent
Scarce on the Ground he lays the ſlipp'ry Maſs
(For the vaſt Quoit was form'd of weighty Braſs.)
The ſilent *Greeks* inſpect with curious Eyes
The Diſk, and weigh the Labour, ere they riſe.
A Crowd then ſtarts.——Two of *Achæan* Race,
At *Ephyre* three boaſt their native Place;
From noted *Piſa* one deriv'd his Birth,
The ſeventh had cultur'd *Acarnania*'s Earth.
More in the Conteſt too a Share had held,
But the loud Clamours of the Pit impell'd
Hippomedon, and fir'd his ardent Soul:
Tow'ring he roſe, and ſhew'd a larger Bowl.

903. *Scarce do his Feet*] Homer gives us a ſimilar Image in his Deſcription of the Foot-Race, *Iliad*, B. 23. V. 763.

——— Αυταρ οπιθεν
Ιχνια τυπλε ποδισσι, παρος κονις αμφιχυθηται.

This

This rather ſeize, young Warriors, who aſpire
To break the Walls of *Thebes*, and wrap in Fire
Her loftieſt Bulwarks: but not ev'ry Hand
Yon Diſk of Size enormous can command:
This ſaid, he lifts (not all his Strength apply'd)
The brazen Maſs, and threw with Eaſe aſide.
Aſtoniſh'd now they ſtand aloof, and yield,
Scarce *Phlegyas* and *Meneſtheus* kept the Field.
(Nor had theſe ſtood the Conteſt out, but Shame
And their great Friends their Perſeverance claim)
To theſe ſpontaneouſly the reſt give Place,
And turn inglorious, but without Diſgrace,
Such as the Targe of *Mars* in *Thracian* Fields,
A noxious Light o'er all *Pangæa* yields,
Wide-ſcatt'ring Splendors ſtrikes the Sun with Fear,
And deeply ſounds beneath the heav'nly Spear.
Firſt roſe *Piſæan Phlegyas* with Applauſe:
His noted Skill from other Objects draws
Their Eyes aſide: now in the golden Sand
He roughens both his Quoit and better Hand;
The Duſt then ſhaken off upon the Pit,
He turns it round, and tries, which Side will fit
His Arm and Fingers beſt, for well he knew
The much-lov'd Game, and ponder'd, ere he threw.
Oft at a Sacrifice, and ritual Game
Was he renown'd (if we may credit Fame)
Where wideſt flows *Alpheus*, to throw o'er
The Diſk unwetted to the fartheſt Shore,
Hence truſting to his Art, nor taught to yield,
He meaſures the rough Acres of the Field,
And Tracts celeſtial with his better Hand,
And, bending either Knee towards the Strand,

He

He calls forth all his Vigour, lifts on high
The maſſy Quoit, and whirls it in the Sky:
Rapid it flies, aſcending in its Flight,
And, whilſt it ſeems quick-falling, grows in Height.
At length, exhauſted all its Force, more ſlow
The Globe return'd, and preſs'd the Plain below.
Thus ſever'd from th' aſtoniſh'd Stars, the Ball
Of darken'd *Phœbe* oft is ſeen to fall;
The Nations, on the mighty Change intent,
Their Timbrels ſtrike, and fear in vain th' Event;
Whilſt the victorious Hag at Diſtance ſmiles,
To ſee her Charms ſucceed and magic Wiles.
The *Greeks* applaud him: nor on level Land
He fears *Hippomedon*'s ſuperior Hand.
But Fortune, who her ev'ry Art employs
To cruſh Ambition, and with Glee deſtroys
The Structure of immod'rate Hope, deprives
His Arm of Strength. In vain with her he ſtrives.
He now, prepar'd a Length of Space to gain,
Low-bending to the Taſk: beneath the Strain
The Muſcles of his vig'rous Body ſwell:
When lo! before his Feet the Diſcus fell,
Short of his Vow, and faithleſs to his Hand:
His Comrades ſigh, his Foes their Joys command.
Meneſtheus then ſucceeds with timid Art
To the bold Taſk, and acts the cautious Part:

v. 967. *Thus ſever'd*] The Poet in this Simile alludes to a received Notion of the Antients, that the Eclipſes of the Moon were occaſioned by magic Spells; at which Time they played on Timbrels, Cymbals and other muſical Inſtruments, to forward her Delivery, ſuppoſing her to be in Labour.

To

To *Maia*'s winged Offspring much he pray'd,
And with heap'd Duſt the Diſcus rougher made.
Tho' ſent with far leſs Vigour than before,
It ſpeeds, nor ſtops till it had meaſur'd o'er
Full half the Circus.——A deep, hollow Sound
Enſues, and a fix'd Arrow marks the Ground.
Hippomedon with boding Heart ſucceeds
The third, nor to the forceful Conteſt ſpeeds;
For much he ponders in his Mind the Woe
Of *Phlegyas*, and *Meneſtheus*' lucky Throw.
He lifts the Quoit, accuſtom'd to his Hand,
And poiſing it aloft at his Command,
Conſults his val'rous Arms, and hardy Side,
And hurls it (his whole Art and Strength apply'd)
And follows it himſelf.——The Diſcus flies
With horrid Bound along the vacant Skies,
And, mindful of the Hand's directing Force,
At Diſtance keeps the Tenor of its Courſe;
Nor doubtfully the vanquiſh'd Chief it paſs'd,
Beſide the other's Limit nearly caſt;
But far beyond *Meneſtheus*' Mark it took
Its Stand, and, as portending Ruin, ſhook
The Pillars that ſupport the ſylvan Scene,
And ſhady Roof, imbowr'd with living Green.
Such was the Stone from *Ætna*'s vap'rous Height
The *Cyclop* threw, his Hand unrul'd by Sight,
When, guided by the daſhing of the Flood,
Ulyſſes' hoſtile Veſſel he purſu'd.

v. 1014. *Ulyſſes*'] After this Verſe follow three others in the Earl of *Arundel*'s Manuſcript Copy: But as they are to be found in no other Book, and *Statius* has ſo many Similes drawn from this Attack of the Giants, that I thought it needleſs to tranſlate them, though

Adraſtus to the Victor then aſſigns
As the firſt Prize, a Tiger's Hide that ſhines
With yellow Hem, refulgent to behold:
The Sharpneſs of the Claws was dull'd with Gold.
With *Gnoſſian* Bow and Shafts *Meneſtheus* hies
Content.—To luckleſs *Phlegyas* then he cries,
Accept this Sword, *Pelaſgus'* Aid and Pride,
Since adverſe Fortune has the Palm deny'd;
Nor will th' invidious Victor grieve to ſee
This Gift allotted thee by my Decree.
Decide we now, who beſt the Cæſtus wields:
Skill in this Feat of Vigour ſcarcely yields
To Conteſts of the Sword, and ſteely Blows.
At this *Argolic Capaneus* uproſe,
Fierce to deſcry, and fierce to be deſcry'd;
And, while upon his Arm the Gloves he ty'd,
Cut out of raw Bull-hides, and cas'd with Lead,
As hard as they, exultingly he ſaid:
Stands there a Youth amidſt yon num'rous Crew,
Here let him iſſue forth in public View?
Yet had I rather, for my Country's Sake,
Some *Theban* Rival would the Challenge take,
Whom I might juſtly hurl to Pluto's Shore,
Nor ſtain my ſtronger Hand, with ſocial Gore.

though they are not deſtitute of poetical Merit, as the Reader may ſee,

> Sic et Aloidæ, cum jam celaret Olympum
> Deſuper Oſſa rigens, ipſum glaciale ferebat
> Pelion, et trepido ſperabant jungere cœlo.

v. 1035. *Yet had I rather*] However diſguſted we may be with the bullying Menaces of *Capaneus*, we cannot but be pleaſed with the Patriotiſm he diſplays on this Occaſion.—He is the *Epeus* of *Homer*, and *Dares* of *Virgil*.

He

He ſaid, and ceas'd.—Fear held them mute, they gaze
In ſtupid Wonder, and in wild Amaze.
At length *Alcidamas* from 'midſt the Train
Of naked *Spartans* ſprings forth on the Plain,
Unhop'd.—The *Doric* Troops with Wonder ey'd
Their King: his Comrades knew that he rely'd,
More than on brutal Strength, on certain Rules,
Train'd up by *Pollux* in the ſacred Schools.
The God himſelf both fix'd his Hands and form'd
His youthful Arms, by holy Friendſhip warm'd;
Oft wou'd he place him fronting, and admire
His daring Spirit, nor unequal Ire,
Then catch him up, exulting, his own Breaſt
With Fervour to his naked Body preſs'd:
Him *Capaneus* derides with threat'ning Hands,
And, pitying, a more equal Foe demands:
E'en forc'd to Combat, his proud Soul rebels,
And his late languid Neck with Fury ſwells.
Preparing for the Combat, high in Air
Their thund'ring Hands th' impetuous Champions rear:
A Fence their Arms extended form around
Their Faces, and exclude each future Wound.
Such Space of Limbs the Chief of *Argos* ſhews,
And ſtaring Bones as *Tityos* might diſcloſe,
Shou'd the fell *Stygian* Vultures ceaſe to feed,
And ſuffer him to riſe, from Torture freed.
The *Spartan* (for his Strength exceeds his Years)
In Look a Boy, in Act a Man appears.
Such is the Proſpect of his riper Age,
That each Spectator mourns his early Rage,
And, leſt he laviſh too much Blood away,
Wiſh to behold a Period to the Fray.

Nor

Nor all at once their Wrath and Blows ariſe;
They ſtay to gratify their curious Eyes
In gazing on each other, and expect,
Each that his Foe would the firſt Blow direct.
Awhile alternate Fears their Wrath aſſuage,
And Caution's calmer Rules were join'd to Rage.
Each with his Hands the vacant Air provokes,
And blunts the Gauntlets with repeated Strokes.
This huſbands well his Strength, (although he glows
With Ire) and deals more ſparingly his Blows:
That, eager of Revenge, himſelf neglects,
And ruſhes blindly on.—No Skill directs
His Random-Strokes: His Teeth in vain he grinds,
And wreaks his haſty Vengeance on the Winds;
For, deeply vers'd in all his Country's Art,
The wary *Spartan* parries off in Part,
Or ſhuns his Rival's Blows.—One while he bows
His Head, and by Compliance 'ſcapes the Blows;
Then his quick Hands aſide the Gauntlets beat,
His Head thrown back, advancing with his Feet.
Oft too (ſo much he has at his Command
The Game, and ſuch the Vigour of his Hand)
He boldly cloſes with the Foe, nor fears
His Giant-Force, confirm'd by Length of Years,
But on him leaps, as on ſome frowning Rock
A Billow falls, then, broken with the Shock,

v. 1079. *This huſbands well his Strength*] Upon Compariſon, I believe, this Game of the Cæſtus will not be thought inferior to the foregoing in any Reſpect. The vain-glorious Fury of *Capaneus*, the Spirit and Adroitneſs of the young *Spartan*, and the different Movements, Attitudes, and Incidents of the Combat, are deſcribed in a very maſterly Manner.

Recoils.—Thus, wheeling round the furious Foe,
He plies him, unrepaid, with many a Blow.
He lifts his Hand, and, flouriſhing around,
Seems on his Flank and Eyes to aim a Wound:
This Feint recalls him from his proper Guard;
And, whilſt the threat'ned Part he ſtrives to ward,
Between his Hands deſcends a ſudden Blow,
And, wounding, marks the middle of his Brow.
The Blood now ſpins forth, and a tepid Rill
Stains either Temple; yet the Warrior ſtill
Perceives it not, but, rolling round his Eyes,
Much wonders, why the ſudden Murmurs riſe:
But, as by Chance he drew back o'er his Head
His weary Hand, and ſaw the Gauntlets red,
As ſome fierce Tyger wounded with a Dart,
Or gen'rous Lion, glowing with the Smart,

v. 1112. *Glowing with the Smart*] Notwithſtanding what Mr. *Pope*, and Mr. *Hind* after him have advanced, in Relation to our Author's ſtudied Originality, in his Deſcription of the funeral Games, there are ſeveral Traits in it, which beſpeak it to be a Copy of that in the Fifth Book of *Virgil*'s Æneid, v. 53. the Lines to which this Note refers, are evidently imitated from the following:

At non tardatus caſu, neque territus Heros,
Acrior ad pugnam redit, ac vim ſuſcitat ira.
Tum pudor incendit vires, et conſcia Virtus:
Præcipitemque Darea ardens agit æquore toto;

Again,

Behold again the *Spartan* Shifts renew'd!
As the Foe, &c.

Are borrowed from

Oſtendit dextram inſurgens Entellus, et alte
Extulit: Ille ictum venientem a vertice velox
Prævidit, celerique elapſus corpore ceſſit.
Entellus vires in ventum effudit, et ultro
Ipſe gravis graviterque ad terram pondere vaſto
Concidit:———

Headlong

Headlong he drives the Youth o'er all the Field,
Forc'd to give Ground, yet ſtill averſe to yield;
And, gnaſhing horribly his Teeth, he throws
His Hands about, and multiplies his Blows.
His Rage is ſpent in Air: his Strokes in Part
Fall on the Cæſtus.—With ſuperior Art,
And active Speed, the *Spartan* Youth bewares
A Thouſand Deaths, that rattle in his Ears:
Yet, not unmindful of his Art he hies,
But turns his Face, and combats as he flies.
Short Pantings now ſucceed, and Toil ſubdues
Their harraſs'd Limbs, more ſlowly he purſues,
And t'other flies:—At length their faulf'ring Knees
Succumb, and both accept a Truce of Eaſe.
Thus when (a Signal giv'n) the Seamen yield
To the long Labours of the wat'ry Field;
Short is their Reſt: The Watch-word ſoon reſtores
Their vig'rous Toils, and they reſume their Oars.
Behold again the *Spartan* Shifts renew'd!
As his Foe blindly ruſhing on he view'd,
He falls ſpontaneouſly—with thund'ring Sound
Th' Aſſaillant pitches headlong on the Ground.
The wily Stripling ſtruck him ere he roſe,
And Smiles of Joy alloy'd with Terror ſhews.
Th' *Inachians* ſhout:—leſs loud the Sea-beat Shore,
And Foreſts, ſhook by bluſt'ring *Boreas*, roar.
But when *Adraſtus* ſaw the Giant riſe,
And lift his Hands for horrid Deeds, he cries
Haſte, haſte, my Friends, I pray, and interpoſe:
With Rage, unutterable Rage he glows,
Reſign the Palm and Prize to his Demands,
And ſnatch the dying *Spartan* from his Hands.

Leſt, when his jealous Wrath is at the full,
He daſh within the Brain his batter'd Skull.
Hippomedon and *Oeneus'* Son obey
Th' Injunctions of the King without Delay;
Yet ſcarce with all their Art and Force combin'd
Reſtrain his Hands, and bend his ſtubborn Mind.
Away—The Vict'ry's thine—'Tis more than Fame
To ſpare the Vanquiſh'd.—His Connections claim
Some ſmall Regard—a Partner in the Fight.—
Th' inexorable Chief receives with Slight
Their Counſels, and, rejecting with his Hands
The proffer'd Palm and Mail, his Foe demands,
And cries—Go to, and give my Vengeance Way,
Shall I not dig his Eyes out, and repay
Thoſe female Tricks (with which he hop'd to gain
The Prize, and Favour of a partial Train)
And, mindleſs of his ſorrowing Patron, doom
His ſhapeleſs Body to the ſilent Tomb?
He ſaid:— His Comrades turn'd him far aſide,
While, ſwoln with Ire, the Conqueſt he deny'd.
The *Spartan* Troops deride his Threats and raiſe
Peals of Applauſe, and ſhout their Champion's Praiſe.
Now, conſcious of his Skill in ev'ry Game,
Oenides burns to win the Prize of Fame.

v. 1158. *Shall I not dig his Eyes out*] I never found myſelf more at a Loſs how to vindicate my Author, than in the Paſſage before us. If he ever deſerved the Cenſure of having made his Heroes too brutal and inhuman, he has certainly done it in this Place. The Picture of *Capaneus* is drawn with too great a Violence of Features: and it is inconceivable, that any one could be ſo horridly revengeful on being foil'd in a Trial of Skill only.

v. 1167. *Now, conſcious*] The Poet omits no Opportunity of complimenting *Tydeus*. The other Warriors excel in one Game only, whereas he is repreſented as equally well verſed in all of them. This inclines me to think, *Statius* intended him as the chief Character in his Poems.

In

In the Foot-Race the foremoſt Name he held,
And in the Quoit and Cæſtus both excell'd:
Yet *Caſtor*'s Glory, and athletic Oil
Delight his Heart above all other Toil.
Thus was he wont his peaceful Hours to ſpend,
And Mind, fatigu'd with warlike Cares, unbend.
Againſt the mightieſt Champions had he ſtood,
Who dwelt near *Achelous*' ſtormy Flood,
And won (Heav'n-taught) the Honours of the Day.
Soon then as Thirſt of Glory calls away
The Youths, moſt noted for athletic Toils,
He ſtrips his Back of the terrific Spoils
(The *Caledonian* Monſter's briſtly Hide)
Agylleus, to *Cleone*'s Race ally'd,
'Gainſt him his ample Limbs, high-tow'ring, rears,
Nor leſs than *Hercules* himſelf appears;
Such o'er the reſt his brawny Shoulders riſe,
And his huge Bulk exceeds the human Size:
Yet not that hardy Force, his Sire could boaſt,
Deſcends to him:—his Strength in Bulk was loſt,
And a Luxuriancy of Blood: his Skin
Was ſmooth without, from Muſcles free within.
Hence only bold *Oenides* hopes t'o'erthrow
Th' unwieldy Might of his gigantic Foe;
For tho' the ſmalleſt of the *Grecian* Throng,
His Bones were large, his Arms ſupremely ſtrong,
And full of Sinews: nor was ſuch a Mind,
And ſo great Strength of Nature e'er confin'd
In a leſs Body.——When with fragrant Oil
Their Limbs were render'd ſupple for the Toil,

They ſpring impetuous from the circling Train,
And occupy the Middle of the Plain:
Then their wet Limbs with Duſt by Turns they dry'd,
And held their Arms bent in, but diſtant wide.
Now *Tydeus* brings by Craft *Agylleus* down
(His Height upon a Level with his own)
And bends him forward, whilſt unmov'd he ſtands
With ſtooping Back and Knees that ſought the Sands.
As on the Cloud-wrapt *Alps* the Cypreſs, Queen
Of Trees, and faireſt in the ſylvan Scene,
To whiſtling Winds her Head, obſequious, bends,
(Tho' on the Root for Stay ſhe ſcarce depends)
And, bowing, almoſt ſeems to kiſs the Plain,
Then ſudden ſhoots up in the Skies again.
Spontaneous thus *Agylleus* preſſes down
His Limbs gigantic, and with many a Groan
Bends himſelf double on his little Foe:
And now their Hands alternate deal a Blow;
Necks, Breaſts, Legs, Foreheads, Shoulders, Sides, and Thighs
Beneath the Strokes in ſudden Tumours riſe.
On Tiptoe rais'd, their Heads obliquely bent,
Each hangs on each, ſtretch'd out at full Extent.
Scarce with ſuch Wrath two Leading-Bulls maintain
The Conflict: in the Middle of the Plain

v. 1207. *As on the cloud-wrapt Alps*, &c.] This Simile does not repreſent the Poſture of the Wreſtlers ſo well as that in the 23d Book of *Homer*'s Iliad, Verſe 712.

Ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀμείξοντες, τὰς τε κλυτὸς ἤραρε τέκτων,
Δούρατος ὑψηλοῖο, βίας ἀνέμων ἀλεείνων.

v. 1221. *Scarce with ſuch Wrath*] This Compariſon is copied from *Virgil*'s Æneid, Book 12, Verſe 715, and is not, I think, inferior to the Original.

Ac

Stands the fair Cauſe, expecting which will lead
The ſubject Herds, and rule the ſpacious Mead.
With claſhing Horns the Combatants engage,
Love heals their Wounds, and fans their kindled Rage.
As the wild Boar (his Eye-balls flaſhing Fire)
Whets his dull Tuſks, in Height of jealous Ire,
Or as the ſhapeleſs Bear diſputes the Prey
With ſhaggy Gripes.—Thus *Tydeus* urg'd the Fray,
And brav'd the ſultry Sun, and duſty Toil:
Cloſe was his Skin, inur'd with frequent Toil,
And his rough Limbs well-muſcled.——But his Foe,
Impair'd with Labour, 'gan to puff and blow,
And ſick to Death, gapes oft with Streſs of Pain,
And ſhakes the high-heap'd Sand upon the Plain
With copious Streams of Sweat, and, unſurvey'd,
By catching at the Ground, his Breaſt upſtay'd.
Tydeus purſues, and while with threat'ning Eyes
He mark'd his Neck, runs full between his Thighs:
But his Hands balk the Purpoſe of his Mind,
And fall far ſhort of what the Chief deſign'd.
Prone fell the Giant-Warrior, and oppreſs'd
With wide Extent of Ruin all his Breaſt.
Thus when th' *Iberian* ſeeks ſome cavern'd Height
With Metal fraught, and leaves the vital Light,

Ac velut ingenti Silâ, ſummove Taburno,
Cum duo converſis inimica in prælia tauri
Frontibus incurrunt, pavidi ceſſere magiſtri:
Stat pecus omne metu mutum, muſſantque juvencæ,
Quis pecori imperitet, quem tota armenta ſequantur:
Illi inter ſeſe multa vi vulnera miſcent,
Cornuaque obnixi infigunt, & ſanguine largo
Colla, armosque lavant, gemitu nemus omne remugit.

Ere

Ere the rent Earth ſends forth a ſudden Sound,
And trembles o'er his Head the pendant Ground,
His Body cruſh'd and pent beneath the Weight
Of the burſt Mount, and wrapt in gloomy Fate,
A Document of puniſh'd Av'rice lies,
Nor the free Soul regains its kindred Skies.
Oenides, tho' beneath the Foe he lay,
Riſes in Spirits, and without Delay,
From the huge Graſp, and heavy Burden freed.
Th' eluded Warrior compaſſes with Speed,
And faſtens ſudden on his Back, then holds
His purſy Sides, embrac'd in rigid Folds;
Next, preſſing either Ham with either Knee,
While the foil'd Champion ſtrove in vain to free
His Limbs faſt bound, and thruſt beneath his Side
His Hand (O wonderful to be deſcry'd!)
He lifts the Giant, reſted on his Breaſt:
Thus in his Arms (Fame ſays) *Alcides* preſt
His Earth-born Foe, and from his Mother-Ground
Uprais'd, when now the ſecret Fraud he found,
Nor Hope was longer left to fall, or reach
With his broad Feet the Surface of the Beach.
A joyful Shout enſues, and ſtrikes the Sky,
Rais'd by the Troops.—Then poiſing him on high,
Sudden, and of his own Accord again
He threw him down obliquely on the Plain,
And following as he fell, his Right-Hand plac'd
Upon his Neck, his Feet upon his Waiſt.

v. 1264. *Thus in his Arms*] Every Time *Antæus* touched the Earth, he acquired freſh Vigour. *Lucan* has deſcribed this Combat with infinite Spirit in the 4th Book of his *Pharſalia*. Verſe 611.

Thus preſs'd, no more Reſiſtance had he ſhewn,
But Shame impells him on, and Shame alone.
His Belly wide-extended on the Ground,
Proſtrate he lies.—At length when now he found
His Senſe returning, up he roſe again,
And left his Form imprinted on the Plain.
But *Tydeus*, gifted with the Palm and Prize
Of glitt'ring-Arms, in Height of Tranſport, cries
Not half ſo long, I ween, had he withſtood,
But *Thebes* has drank too freely of my Blood.
Theſe honeſt Wounds the glorious Fact atteſt.
While thus he ſpake, he bar'd his manly Breaſt,
And gave the Prizes to his menial Crew:
Agylleus takes the ſlighted Mail, his Due.
The *Theban* then, yet unconſtrain'd by Fate,
And *Agreus*, urg'd with Thirſt of Fame, not Hate,
Advance with naked Swords (in Armour clad)
To dare the Combat: but the King forbad.
O Youths, great Store of Death will ſoon betide;
Then let your eager Rage for Blood ſubſide;
Your Courage, till the Fight begins, reſtrain:
And thou, for whom we've left our own Domain,
Diſpeopling many Cities, do not truſt
Thy Life to Chance, nor thro' immod'rate Luſt
Of Glory, grant the Wiſhes of thy Foes,
And thy fell Brother's Vows (ye Pow'rs oppoſe)
Then a gilt Helm he gives in both their Hands;
And ſtrait, in Honour of his Son, commands

v. 1292. *But the King forbad*] *Homer* having been blamed by ſome of the Antients for deſcribing this barbarous and ſhocking Combat, *Statius* has very prudently waved it, and rendered *Adraſtus* highly amiable by his Prohibition of it.

The

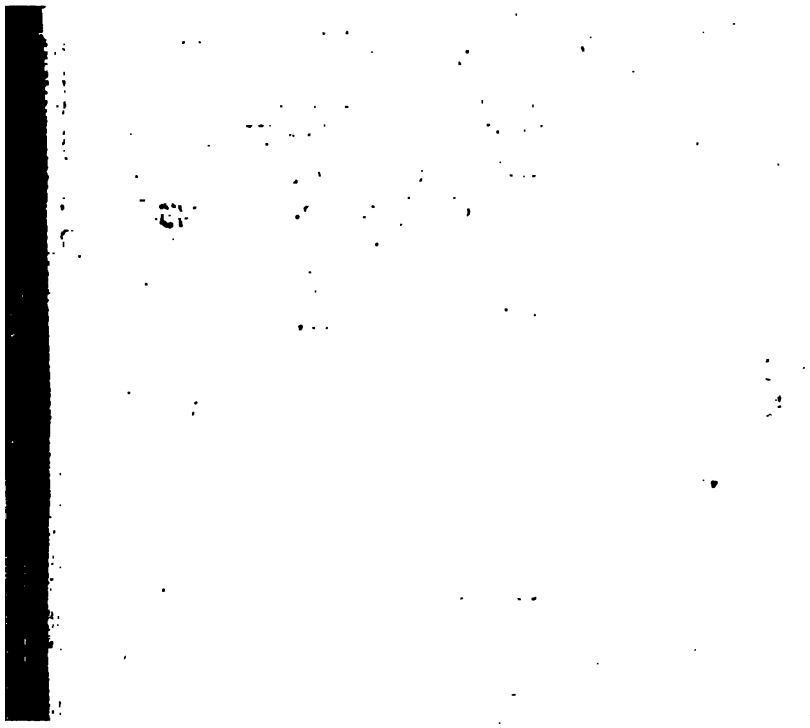
The Crowd to wreath his Brows, and by the Name
Of Conqueror of *Thebes*, proclaim his Fame.
The rig'rous Fates this Omen render vain.
The Nobles urge the Monarch, to ſuſtain
A Part in the funereal Games, and crown
The Rites himſelf:—and left one Chief alone
Of all the ſev'n no Victory ſhould gain,
With earneſt Zeal they beg, that he will deign
In Archery to prove his matchleſs Art,
Or hurl with dextrous Skill the flying Dart,
The King aſſents, and, follow'd by a Train
Of Youths, deſcends with Joy upon the Plain:
The Squire behind him bears at his Command
A Bow, and light-wing'd Arrows in his Hand.
A Wild-Aſh far beyond the Circus lies,
The deſtin'd Mark, at which his Arrow flies.
Who can deny, that ev'ry Omen ſprings
From hidden Cauſes of terreſtrial Things?
The Book of Fate lies open. We refuſe
The ready Preſcience, offer'd to our Views;

v. 1319. *Who can deny*] This Exclamation, as well as many other Paſſages in this Work, beſpeak our Author to have been of a very ſuperſtitious Turn of Mind.

I cannot ſee how the Poet can ſtile this Attempt a Conteſt, and its Succeſs a Victory, when there was no Antagoniſt. It is a mere Feat of Archery.——*Adraſtus* is deſired by his Nobles to give a public Proof of his Skill either in ſhooting or darting. He chooſes the former, and fingling out a Tree which grew on the farther Side of the Circus, ſhoots, and hits the Mark.——The Incident of the Arrow's returning back, though it borders upon the marvellous, is as natural as that of *Aceſtes*'s kindling: but the Application of it to the Event it is intended to prognoſticate is certainly more juſt and proper than *Virgil*'s alluding either to the firing of the Ships or the *Julium Sidus*, as Meſſieurs *Catrou* and *Warton* have conjectured.

We put the Pow'r to hurt in Fortune's Hands:
And thus for mere Chance-work each Omen ſtands.
The fatal Arrow meaſur'd o'er the Ground,
And in the Tree infix'd a ſlender Wound;
Then (Sight tremendous!) by the ſelf-ſame Track,
And Air it cleav'd before, comes flying back,
Kept to the End the Tenour of the Way,
And falling, near the well-known Quiver lay.
Th' erroneous Chiefs miſlead the liſt'ning Crowds;
Theſe think it driven by rencountring Clouds,
And Winds.—Thoſe hold, that the re-acting Wood
Impell'd it back again.——None underſtood
The great Event, and Sequel clearly ſhown.
Propitious was the War to him alone:
And the Shaft promis'd its much favour'd Lord,
A ſafe Return, and Reſcue from the Sword.

End of Vol. I.



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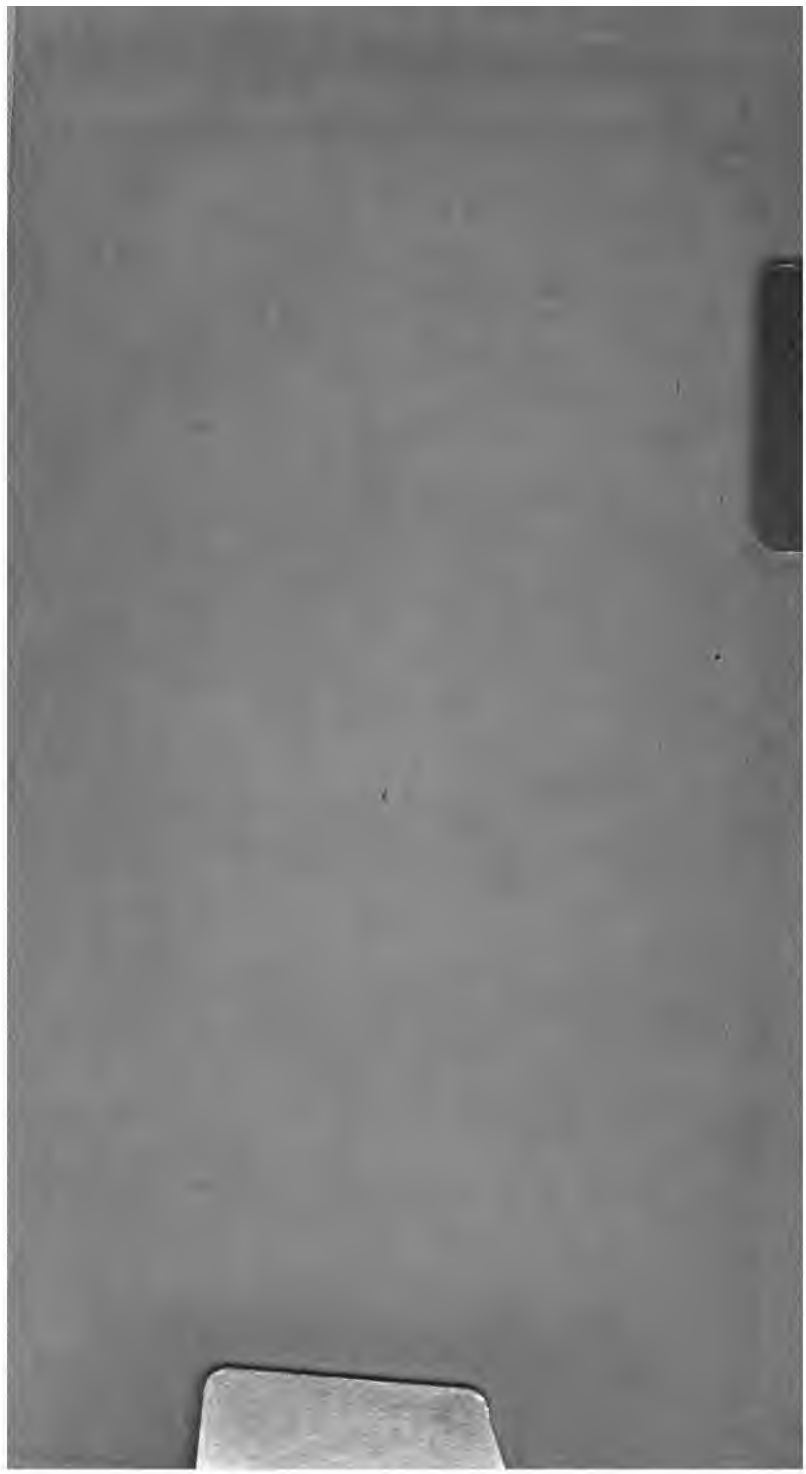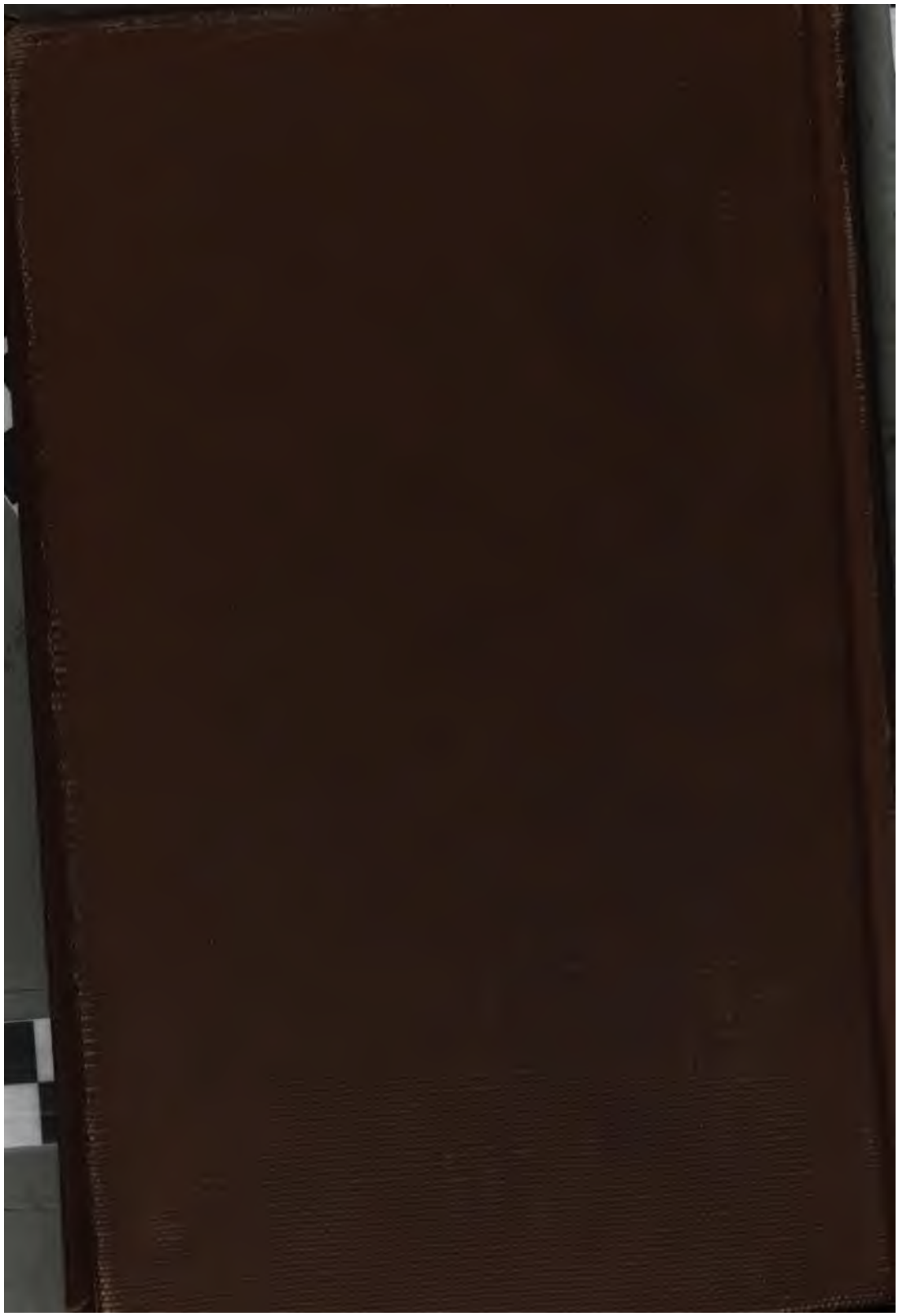
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